

September 3-4, 1998

Yeltsin, a loaf of heavy Russian bread

MOSCOW (R) — President Bill Clinton's tribute to Boris Yeltsin, under pressure — at least that's what he's doing when he's compared the Kremlin leader to a loaf of heavy Russian bread. Clinton was at the start of his first annual summit with the solid black loaf on hand. Clinton was spring quickly to his feet, like you, he said, to the Russian president who is stuck in his first crisis in years.

A menacing welcome message to pupils

MOSCOW (R) — Tax police warned pupils on their way back at school with a menacing message that their future would be determined by their parents' income tax authorities. The State Tax Service said you succeed in school, you succeed in life, success in your career is certain that if you will become a professional, conscientious, hardworking student, and your parents will support you, you will be successful in the future.

Liberal Party's electronic low blow

CANBERRA (R) — Computer hackers have broken into the Liberal Party's electronic database, stealing information on the party's members and donors. The Liberal Party's Minister of Health, Howard Morrison, said the party's database had been hacked.

To the cleaners or apologise

WINNIPEG (R) — A woman who was denied a job at a Winnipeg area age said she planned to sue the company for discrimination. She said she was a cleaner and the company had refused to hire her because she was a single mother.

Conned into a gigolo

HONG KONG (R) — A woman was conning a man into sex with a gigolo, the police said. The woman, who was 30, had told the man that she was a prostitute and that she needed his help to get out of the country.

Muasher: King back at Mayo

NEW YORK (Petra) — Jordan's Ambassador to the U.S. Marwan Muasher said Friday that His Majesty King Hussein is in good health. In a telephone interview with Jordan News Agency, Petra, Muasher said that the King left Washington on Wednesday and headed for Mayo Clinic, Minnesota, to start the third session of chemotherapy which will last for four days. He pointed out that King Hussein enjoys high morale and responds very well to treatment, saying that the Monarch will return home once the treatment is complete.

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Israel gives up two demands in West Bank pullout talks

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel is giving up two of its demands in negotiations with the Palestinians: the extradition of "terrorists" and a reduction in the number of Palestinian police, public television announced Friday. The government is making "major concessions on the eve of the visit of Dennis Ross," the U.S. special envoy for the Middle East who is scheduled to arrive here next week after a four-month absence. Ross is coming to give a push to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process which has been bogged down over negotiations for a further Israeli pullback from the West Bank. A formula will be found that allows the Palestinian Authority not to extradite to Israel Palestinian militants wanted for anti-Israeli attacks, who have taken refuge in the Palestinian territories, the television said. The second concession involves dropping the demand for reductions in the Palestinian police force and the number of arms in their possession, the television said.

Iraqi Kurd leader vows not to help oust Saddam

ANKARA (AFP) — Iraqi Kurd leader Massoud Barzani said Friday that his Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) will not get involved in any plot to topple President Saddam Hussein. "Our policy is we will not allow anyone to use us as a card for such projects," Barzani said at a news conference here when asked how he would respond to a potential U.S. plan to overthrow Saddam when he meets U.S. officials in Washington next week. "We are not informed of any project to topple Saddam," Barzani added.

Israeli intelligence: Iran developing spy satellite

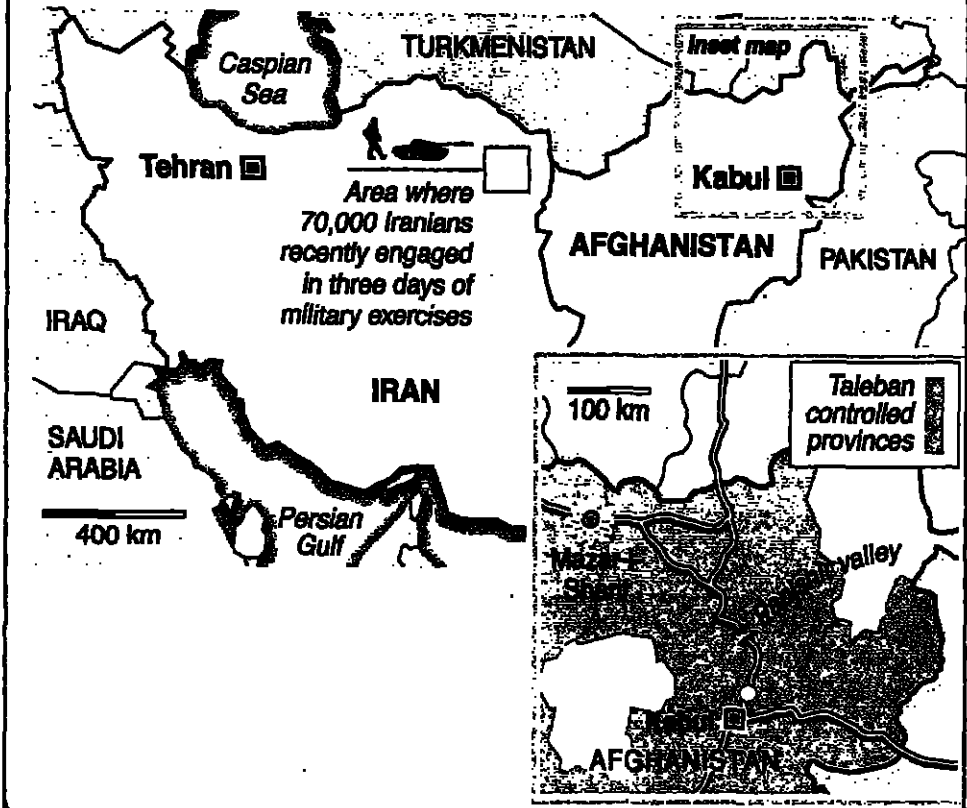
TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli intelligence officials believe Iran is developing a spy satellite as part of its ballistic missile programme, Israeli Channel 2 television reported Friday. The officials reached this conclusion from their analysis of Iranian television's video shots of Iranian ruler Ali Khamenei's recent visit to the missile development plant, Channel 2 said. In the video shots the analysts spotted a satellite launcher and what could be the basis for a spy satellite which could cover the entire Middle East including Israel, the TV said.

Yemen to apply again for Commonwealth membership

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen will try again to join the Commonwealth when the body meets in October in London. Deputy Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Saifi said Friday. "Yemen will present its request to join the Commonwealth again during the organisation's upcoming meeting," Saifi said in a statement to the weekly Sept. 26. "This request is still being studied," he said, adding that he was optimistic that this time Yemen will be accepted. Yemen first applied for Commonwealth membership at the end of 1996. The country's southern provinces were under British domination between 1839 and 1967.

IRANIAN WAR GAMES ON AFGHAN BORDER

Tensions have risen on the Afghan-Iran border as a Western human rights group accused Afghanistan's ruling Taliban of a massacre that could explain the disappearance of 10 missing Iranian diplomats



Afghan-Iran tensions mount as diplomats said dead

ISLAMABAD (R) — Tensions have risen on the Afghan-Iran border as a Western human rights group accused Afghanistan's ruling Taliban of a massacre that could explain the disappearance of 10 Iranian diplomats.

The quarrel is the bitterest yet between the Tehran and the Taliban, which controls most of Afghanistan but is refused recognition by most of the world.

Although both espouse radical forms of Islam, Iran's ruling clergy are Shiite Muslims and have long encouraged religious and ethnic groups opposing the Sunni, mainly Pushtoon Taliban.

About 70,000 Iranian troops, including Revolutionary Guards, paratroopers and commandos with tanks, are conducting war games in northeast Iran only 60 km from the Afghan border.

The Taliban describes the Iranian manoeuvres as threatening behaviour and denies knowing the fate of Iranian diplomats who were in the northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif when Taliban forces captured it from the opposition last month.

In a report issued on Thursday, Amnesty International (AI) said Taliban fighters massacred thousands of civilians of the Hazara ethnic minority after the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif — and possibly 10 Iranian diplomats and a journalist with them.

A Taliban spokesman dismissed the London-based human rights group's report as "false" and said it

was based on propaganda by the militia's enemies.

Iran has been saying for weeks that the Iranian diplomats and the correspondent had been arrested. The Taliban's supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar said on Tuesday they were "probably dead."

AI said its report on the massacre was based on "testimonies from eyewitnesses and surviving members of the victims' families."

"Taliban guards deliberately and systematically killed thousands of ethnic Hazara civilians during the first three days following their military takeover of Mazar-e-Sharif on 8 August 1998," it said, quoting what it called "new information" received by the group.

Thousands of Taliban fighters were killed in street fighting in Mazar-e-Sharif after the militia briefly captured the town last year.

"Since their arrival in Mazar-e-Sharif, the Taliban (forces) have sealed the area to foreign media and independent observers," Amnesty said.

"Eleven Iranian nationals (10 diplomats and one journalist) are said to have been killed when Taliban (militia) guards entered the Iranian consulate in Mazar-e-Sharif," the Amnesty statement said.

"Despite conflicting reports about their fate, eyewitnesses say that their bodies were left in the consulate for two days before being buried in a mass grave," it said.

Taliban authorities have denied having any information about the whereabouts

Premier set to win vote of confidence as he rallies support among deputies

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the new government prepares to face Parliament in two weeks for a vote of confidence, Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh has been covering his bases by meeting with parliamentary blocs to secure support ahead of submitting his government's policy statement.

Following the tradition of former prime ministers awaiting Parliament's stamp of approval on their cabinets, Tarawneh met with the 14-member Parliamentary Alliance Bloc last week, and on Wednesday met with the Parliamentary Solidarity Bloc and is expected to meet with the Democratic Solidarity bloc on Sunday.

During his meeting with the 14-member Parliamentary Alliance Bloc, led by former Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb, deputies expressed their views on unemployment, poverty, privatisation, setting a minimum wage, economic reforms as well as other economic issues.

According to Abul Ragheb, deputies also complained of problems facing the private sector due to lack of cooperation on the side of the government, the lack of credibility and transparency in the manner in which governments deal with different problems and ways of combating corruption, nepotism and the bloated bureaucracy.

However, he told the Jordan Times that he was pleased with the general outcome of the meeting which lasted for four and a half hours, hinting that his bloc would give the government a vote of confidence.

"The prime minister was very responsive and he seems willing to cooperate at all levels,"

"We like to support a government that can do something," Abul Ragheb said. "The general mood [among the bloc] was that we should look objectively at this government and give it a chance."

One member of the 14-man Al Wifaq bloc, led by National Constitutional Party Secretary General Abdul Hadi Majali,



Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh

echoed Abul Ragheb's response regarding their meeting with the Premier.

"The meeting went well, and the prime minister seems willing to cooperate," Mohammad Thweib told the Jordan Times.

Tarawneh is expected to meet with the 16-member Democratic Solidarity Bloc, led by Barjis Hadid, on Sunday. House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Sour is also a member of the bloc.

One overriding concern among the blocs was Tarawneh's recent announcement that ministers, who are also members of the Senate, should resign from the Upper House of Parliament to ensure the principle of separation of powers between the executive and legislative authorities and to allow the House to exercise its role in monitoring the government's performance.

Reports in the Arabic press said Tarawneh's move aimed to "please" deputies upset that the House was not consulted on the makeup of the Cabinet and that the government included senators but did not include any deputies.

Deputies, however, were angered by the move and said it was "unconstitutional," since it also means that deputies cannot

join the Cabinet.

"This unprecedented move does not show respect to deputies for not being included in the Cabinet," said Abul Ragheb, who said he believes in parliamentary governments.

He said many governments in the past were made up of deputies. Both former Prime Ministers Taher Masi and Abdul Karim Kabariti were members of the House when they formed their governments in 1992 and 1996 respectively. They had an overwhelming majority of deputies in their cabinets.

"The Constitution allows for the inclusion of deputies and senators in the government, asking the ministers to resign from the Senate is a violation of the Constitution," Deputy Khalil Atiyeh said.

On a different note, the nine-member National Bloc is inclined to vote against the newly-appointed government, according to Atiyeh.

"The present intention among the members is to vote against the government," he said.

He said his bloc, which has not met with Tarawneh yet, will prefer to meet with the prime minister a few days before he submits his policy statement to have more time to observe the government's performance.

Obtaining the House confidence will not be a difficult task for the Cabinet, according to deputies and observers. They added that around 50 deputies are expected to vote in favour of Tarawneh's government, formed amid rising accusations against the former government of Abdul Salam Majali of failing to meet people's needs, and of nepotism and corruption.

According to the Constitution, 41 deputies have to vote against a government for it to fail.

The former government of Abdul Salam Majali won the vote of confidence with 51 voice votes last year.

Lockerbie suspects' lawyer demands protection guarantees

TRIPOLI (AFP) — The lawyer for two Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie bombing insisted Thursday on guarantees that the pair will not be kidnapped or expelled if they are sent to the Netherlands for trial.

Ibrahim Legwell told AFP he was demanding a "guarantee that the two suspects will not be abducted or deported to another country" once they go to the Netherlands for trial under Scottish law and by Scottish judges.

Washington must also "give up its demand to the Hague that they be tried after the agreed-on trial under an existing accord between the Netherlands and the United States," he said, without elaborating.

Legwell also demanded "an agreement between Tripoli and the Hague on their transfer to the Netherlands" for trial for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people perished.

Arrangements for the "social and religious life" during the trial of Abdul Basset Ali

Mohammad Al Megrabi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah must also be worked out, he said.

These are "demands, not conditions," he added. Legwell said Dutch lawyers have been appointed to the defence team which already includes African, American, Arab, French, German, Maltese, Scottish and Swiss lawyers.

The defence team met Monday in Tripoli to discuss details of the U.S.-British proposal.

"The recommendations which preceded the international penal court's creation suggested that any sentence should be served in the country where it was handed down, for humanitarian reasons," Legwell said.

"Our goal now is to hold the trial in a third country," he added.

An Arab League delegation is also in Tripoli to hold talks with Libyan officials and the defence lawyers on guarantees for the suspects, demands which have been rejected.

League Assistant Secretary General Ahmad Ben Helli said the team brought several ideas concerning the need for agree-

ment on arrangements and guarantees for the appearance of the two Libyans before the court.

Ben Helli said the league wanted "to ensure an Arab position in support of Libya's" in this matter.

The league's Libyan representative, Salma Rashed, said Tuesday the delegation will hold talks on a Lockerbie trial "formula" that will represent the "united Arab position."

"We are expecting positive developments," she said.

Tripoli initially welcomed an offer by Britain and the United States to try the suspects in the Netherlands using Scottish law and Scottish judges.

But after first saying that Tripoli accepted the offer with "no conditions" Libyan President Muammar Qadhafi called both for negotiations on the procedures of the trial and "guarantees" on the fate of the suspects, demands which have been rejected.

Libya also insists that the Arab League pass a resolution demanding the "immediate" lifting of the sanctions by Arab

countries at its ministerial meeting to be held in Cairo in two weeks' time.

The United Nations imposed sanctions on Tripoli in 1992 over its refusal to extradite the suspects for trial in the United States or Britain.

Qadhafi held talks Thursday in Tripoli with the Saudi ambassador in Washington, Prince Bandar Ben Sultan, on the latest developments in the Lockerbie affair, Libyan television reported.

The talks focused on the "coordination required to implement the initiative aimed at resolving amicably" the Lockerbie dossier, it said.

Libyan television said Bandar was sent to Tripoli by Saudi King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah to inquire about the health of Qadhafi who underwent surgery in July.

The television cited a new statement by the Libyan foreign ministry reiterating "the need to negotiate with Libya, directly or through an agreed third party, measures to assure the success of the initiative and to lift the sanctions."

Arafat says progress unlikely as Ross heads to region

Agencies

AS WASHINGTON resumed Mideast mediation efforts, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said Friday that a deal on an Israeli troop withdrawal in the West Bank was not close at hand.

Israeli officials have said the gaps between the two sides have narrowed, but Arafat said little progress has been made. "Actually, they [Israelis] are saying so but the gaps are still wide," Arafat told reporters in Gaza City after returning from a visit in South Africa.

U.S. Mideast envoy Dennis Ross plans to arrive in the region next week to try and wrap up a deal. On the table is an American proposal for an Israeli withdrawal from 13 per cent of the West Bank, to be met by a Palestinian crackdown on

Islamists.

Asked whether he believed Ross would be able to persuade Israel to agree to the U.S. initiative, Arafat said: "I don't think so." "This is not the first time that Ross is coming here," Arafat said.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Ross would meet with Netanyahu and Arafat early next week "on the chances of the parties reaching agreement on the basis of the U.S. initiative." Israel originally rejected the U.S. initiative but recently softened its position, saying it was ready to hand over 10 per cent in full and another three per cent with some conditions.

If the Ross visit proves successful, Clinton might try to arrange a meeting with Netanyahu and Arafat around Sept. 23, when both leaders are in New York for the U.N. General Assembly, Israel media reported.

The United States put its mediation attempts on hold several weeks ago and

'This is not the first time that Ross is coming here'

asked the sides to work out a deal themselves.

Clinton decided to send Ross to the region after talking Wednesday by phone to Arafat and Netanyahu who both

requested the envoy's visit.

The U.S. president expressed dissatisfaction with Netanyahu, a senior U.S. official told reporters travelling in Ireland with Clinton.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Clinton later called Arafat, who was attending a conference in South Africa. He offered no description of the conversation.

Meanwhile, Israel hit out at South African President Nelson Mandela on Friday over his criticism of the Jewish state during the Non-Aligned summit this week.

The foreign ministry said Mandela's remarks blaming Israel for the 18-month deadlock in the Middle East peace process were "unpleasant and unhelpful."

During the conference in Durban, South Africa, Mandela criticised Netanyahu for

"blocking progress towards a just and peaceful solution" to the problems in the Middle East, "including the formation of a sovereign state of Palestine."

Press reports in Israel said Mandela accused Netanyahu's rightwing government of pursuing "narrow, chauvinistic interests."

Peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians have been at an impasse largely over the Jewish state's settlement policies in occupied territories.

In their final declaration Friday, heads of state from the Non-Aligned Movement expressed "deep concern over the current deadlock in the Middle East peace process... as a result of the policies and actions of the Israeli government, in violation of existing agreements, including settlement activities."

September 5, 1998

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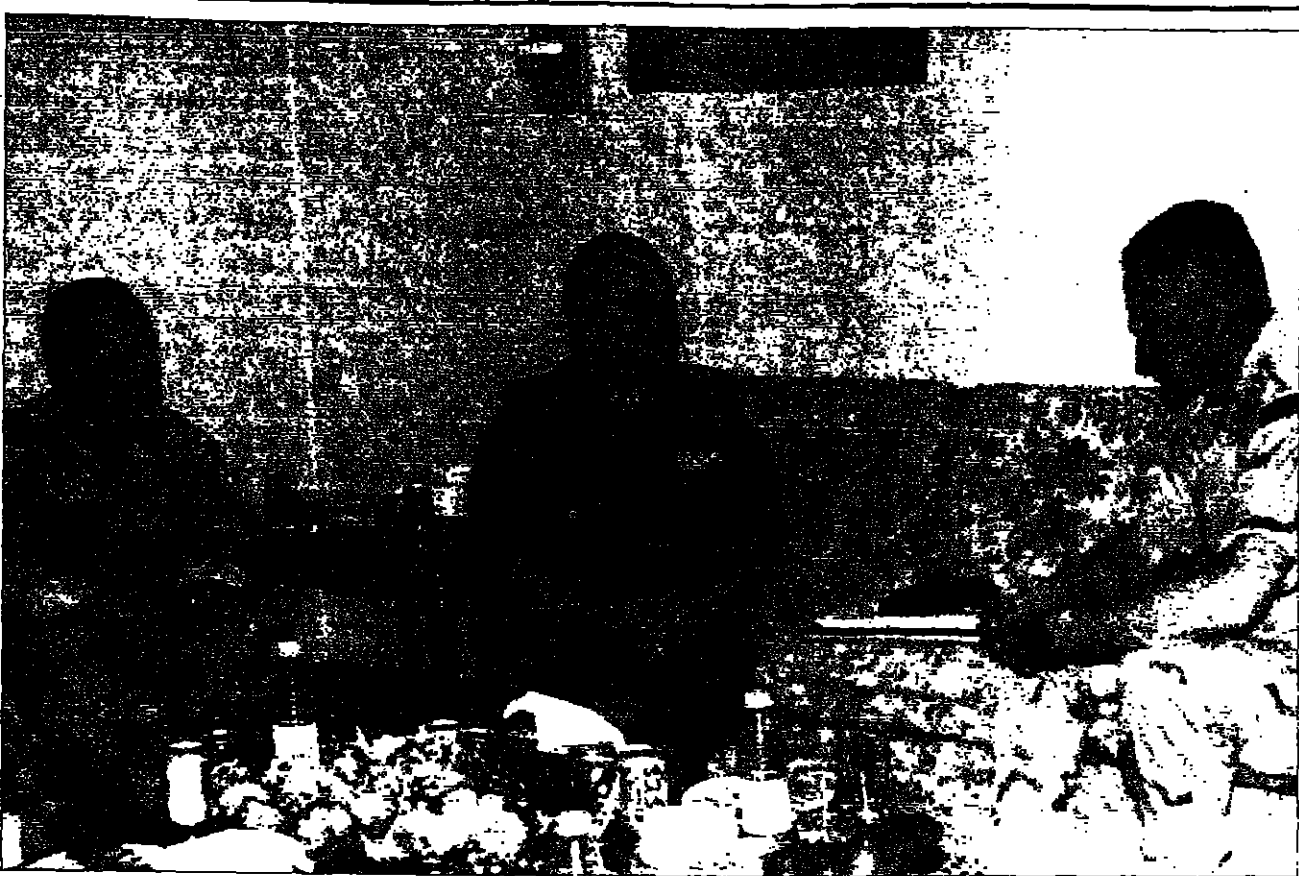
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U.S. Joint
Chiefs of Staff
chairman
concludes
visit

AMMAN (Petra) — The chairman of the U.S. Armed Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff, Henry Shelton, Friday concluded a two-day visit to Jordan.

On Thursday, Shelton was received by HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Kaabneh, with whom he discussed bilateral military cooperation and coordination.

Earlier, Shelton met with HRH Prince Abdullah, commander of the Special Forces, and HRH Prince Faisal and reviewed military exercises with live ammunition at a Special Forces training field.



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Henry Shelton, who left the Kingdom Friday following a two-day visit (Jordan Armed Forces photo)

National fund temporarily
suspends emergency aid
programme — report

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Social Development has temporarily suspended the emergency cash aid provided to needy families through the National Aid Fund (NAF) pending a comprehensive policy review.

A report in the Arabic daily Al Rai on Friday quoted a ministry source as saying that the suspension will be effective until the ministry has re-examined the current system with a view to introducing measures that would ensure fair distribution.

Last week, Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mamser described the present mechanism of providing assistance to needy groups as "inefficient" due to a lack of coordination among aid institutions.

Mamser added that a total of JD140 million in social assistance programmes were spent last year benefiting a total of 65,000 needy families.

At present, the NAF is only distributing "emergency" funds in humanitarian situations, the source said, adding that this assistance will be resumed once the NAF has completed its revision of the situation and conducted an assessment of cases that require immediate attention.

The ministry source said the suspension will not affect families that receive regular payments of up to JD82 per month and who live at or below the poverty line.

Road accident in Tafileh
leaves 2 dead, 7 injured

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two people were struck and killed and seven other pedestrians, including three children, were injured Thursday when the brakes of a fuel tanker heading down a steep incline in Tafileh failed, according to official sources.

Ibtihal Sa'aydeh, 12, and Sumayah Jarab'ah, 27, were waiting at a bus stop on their way to a wedding when the tanker driver veered around a right hand corner and ran onto the right shoulder. The truck first hit Sa'aydeh and Jarab'ah, then ran into the seven other victims, including five-year-old Attalah Qabab, whose legs were severed in the accident, an official said.

He added that the injured were sitting under an olive tree near the roadside.

The accident occurred at around 1:00 p.m., according to the official.

He said the tanker driver blared his horn and flashed his lights to warn people as his vehicle careened down the road, but the vehicle was moving swiftly and the victims did not notice the danger as they were around the bend in the road.

When the vehicle's tyres began to smoke, the driver, Jumah Mohammad, 35, broke the driver's seat window and jumped out of the truck, according to the official. He said the tanker reached a sharp turn and rolled over.

It was the driver who

telephoned the Civil Defence Department on his mobile phone to report the accident.

"Luckily, rescue teams and fire engines were nearby. They extinguished the fire quickly, averting what would have been a disaster had the flames from the tyres ignited the diesel contained in the tanker," the official said.

Attalah and his six-year-old brother Abdul Hamid were taken by helicopter to King Hussein Medical Centre for treatment, the source said.

The five others injured were rushed to Prince Zeid Ben Hussein Hospital in Tafileh, he added.

Last year 577 people were killed and 16,529 injured in Jordan in 39,005 road accidents.

Rifai calls on NAM to work
toward Middle East peace

DURBAN (Petra) — Senate President Zeid Rifai has called on the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to help revive the Middle East peace process and contribute toward the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Addressing the 12th NAM summit in Durban, South Africa, Rifai said the NAM can use its international political clout to exert pressure on Israel to force it to abide by the accords signed with the legitimate leadership of the Palestinian people.

Rifai, representing His Majesty King Hussein at the summit, noted that the peace process was halted last year due to the present Israeli government's intransigence.

its refusal to implement the signed accords and its continued policy of building Jewish settlements on Palestinian lands.

He said Israel has been carrying out a systematic policy of demolishing Arab homes, arresting Palestinians and committing other atrocities in violation of basic human rights. Rifai said Israel is also pursuing its drive to Judaize Arab east Jerusalem.

Israel must accept the idea of resuming negotiations on the Syrian track from the point at which they were stopped and should abide by U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as well as the Madrid peace conference

and the concept of exchanging land for peace, said Rifai.

Rifai pointed out that a number of Arab states have been placed under sanctions and economic embargoes, which he said have resulted in suffering on the part of children, women and the elderly and deprivation of food, medicine and basic human necessities.

This situation, the Senate president added, has devastated Iraq's infrastructure and contributed to the region's instability.

On the issue of terrorism, Rifai called on the NAM to draw up a code of conduct and devise specific measures to combat terrorism and enhance the rule of the law.



Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh meets with the visiting PLO delegation (Petra photo)

Prime minister meets with
visiting PLO delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — The government has reiterated Jordan's support for the Palestinians in their drive to gain their national rights and establish an independent state on Palestinian soil.

Speaking at a meeting Thursday with a visiting Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) delegation, Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh said the government will work toward fulfilling its national and pan-Arab duties as directed by His Majesty King Hussein in his letter

of designation.

"We are deeply worried and concerned over the sufferings of our Palestinian brothers. This concern stems from the special relationship between the Palestinian and the Jordanian peoples," said Tarawneh.

The delegation, which included Mohammad Nashashibi from the PLO's executive committee, Palestinian Finance Minister Yaser Amer and Faisal Hussein, reaffirmed the Palestinian people's interest in further expanding

economic ties with Jordan.

The delegation members voiced hope that close cooperation would continue through the higher joint Jordanian-Palestinian committee and that visits by officials from two sides would further cement bilateral relations.

The two sides agreed on the need to increase efforts at the Arab, regional and international levels to end the current deadlock in the peace process.

The meeting was also attended by Palestinian Ambassador Omar Khatib.



BOOKS FOR SALE: Literature fans search through a stack of books in downtown yesterday in search of interesting reading material for the new school year (Photo by Yousef Allan)

Jet crash kills 229

(Continued from page 12)

Debris — a pocketbook, shoes, a necklace, a baby sling — was found about an hour after the plane was reported missing.

Wreckage from the crash spread out over ten kilometres, and fishermen helping with the rescue effort said the smell of fuel was overwhelming.

Roy Bears, a Canadian aviation safety investigator, said divers were using sonar to map the debris field and try to locate the two black boxes — one, a voice recorder and the other recording with technical data on the flight — in about 50 metres of water.

Bears said early indications are that it was not a terrorist act.

"There were 16 minutes elapsed from the time they initially declared an urgent situation — smoke in the cockpit" to the time the craft disappeared from radar, he said. "At this point... the crew do not think they have anything that would indicate a terrorist act."

The White House and the FBI agreed terrorism likely was not a factor in the crash, although the FBI was studying passenger manifests. President Bill Clinton, who was visiting Northern Ireland Thursday, was being regularly briefed.

"We are deeply grieved," Clinton told reporters, expressing his condolences to the families.

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien also extended condolences. Canadian officials were scrambling to find 1,000 hotel rooms needed for relatives of the dead, emergency staff and investigators.

Swissair was flying relatives from Zurich to Halifax on Friday. It said the passenger list will not be released until family members are notified — probably not until Saturday.

Dr. Jonathan Mann, a former professor at the Harvard School of Public Health and a pioneer in the fight against AIDS, was among the dead, along with his wife, according to the World Health Organisation. The United Nations said seven U.N. workers returning to headquarters in Geneva

were on board the plane.

"It was like a U.N. air bus," said spokesman Fred Eckhard in New York. "Even before we got confirmation that there were U.N. staff on the flight, we just knew from the identification of the flight that there would've been some of our people on that plane." The three-engine plane dumped tons of fuel over nearby St. Margaret's Bay before crashing. The Canadian Press quoted an airport worker as saying.

At the airports in New York and Geneva, grief counsellors were on hand for relatives of the crash victims. A special lounge was set up in the Delta Air Lines terminal at Kennedy Airport.

It was the first crash of a Swissair plane since Oct. 7, 1979, when one of its DC-8s overshot the runway in Athens, Greece, while attempting to land and burst into flames. Fourteen people were killed.

The plane was put into service in August 1991 and was overhauled in August and September last year, said Georges Schordret, the chief financial officer of parent company SAIRGroup. It had been checked as all before take-off, he added.

The McDonnell Douglas MD-11 is a jet known for its reliability, even though its manufacturer, Boeing, has announced plans to discontinue the model in the year 2000.

Swissair will check its 15 remaining MD-11s in the wake of the crash, Bruggisser said. The fleet will only be brought back into service when it's been established there are no technical problems, he said. That process could take days or months.

Beshara vows to continue resistance

(Continued from page 12)

Beshara said: "I am ashamed of talking about a few electric shocks... when recalling the Qana massacre," where 105 civilians were killed in a 1996 Israeli shelling in south Lebanon.

Television and radio stations across Lebanon interrupted regular programmes to broadcast the "great national news" of Beshara's release.

The communist-run Voice of the People radio aired nationalist songs and broadcast messages of congratulations from listeners.

"This is a historical moment. She is the flower of the south, the cedar of Lebanon," said one caller.

"She is the living proof of the staunch, unended Lebanese resistance," said another.

Last year, Lahad told AFP that he would liberate Beshara "because she is a poor girl who was intoxicated and lured into committing an error," but that he did not want her to become a "Lebanese Joan of Arc."

But she, nevertheless, became a symbol of resistance to the Israeli occupation for many groups, including

her communist party and the Shiite Moslem Hezbollah, which spearheads guerrilla attacks in south Lebanon.

Her name was on a list presented by Lebanon during negotiations for the body of a slain Israeli commando that secured the release in June of numerous Lebanese detainees and the return of the remains of anti-Israeli guerrillas.

But at that time Israel did not agree to her release.

About 42 Lebanese are still detained in prisons inside Israel and nearly 125 at Khiam, according to a prisoners committee.

what's going on

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL
"Summer 98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funun, Jabbal Weiddeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:
EXHIBITIONS
* 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon and works by Jordanian artist Sahel Hiani at the Main House.
* Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddadin at the Blue House.
* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.
* Exhibition of photographs "Memory of a Place" by

Jordanian artist Hussein Da'esh at the Museum.
CONCERT
* Concert by the Malaysian Kuala Lumpur Folkloric Dance Band at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:30 p.m.
EXHIBITIONS
* Paintings by Rula Shukri at the French Cultural Centre, Jabbal Amman, until Sept. 30.
* Exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al Bandak at Al Baidar Hall, Kan Zaman village (Tel. 5862531), until Sept. 17.

The Editor and Staff of the Jordan Times
mourn the passing of
Bassant Hassan Shukri
grandmother of their friend and colleague
Alia Shukri Hamzeh.
May her soul rest in peace.

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Embattled Clinton hopeful on N. Irish peace

DUBLIN (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton voiced confidence Friday about the prospects for peace in Northern Ireland as controversy over his affair with Monica Lewinsky dogged the southern leg of his whirlwind Irish tour.

Clinton, buoyed by the warm reception he received across Northern Ireland Thursday, spoke of his "personal passion" for the Irish question and said he hoped his visit would help maintain the momentum for peace.

Clinton hinted that he expected Northern Irish Protestant leader David Trimble and his arch political rival, Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams, to break another long-standing taboo next week by meeting face to face for the first time.

"The statements in the last few days by Gerry Adams and Mr. Trimble's response make me quite hopeful about next week, and then after that we'll just have to see where we go from there," Clinton told reporters at a picture-taking session with Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern.

Ahern heaped praise on Clinton for his unstinting efforts to help Northern Ireland draw a line under three decades of sectarian and political conflict over the future of British rule of the province in which 3,600 have been killed.

"What the president's visit has done is that it's got the parties to move, on what

might have taken weeks and months, over a very short period," Ahern said.

Ahern, too, suggested that Clinton's visit was likely to lead to a breakthrough meeting between Adams, whose party is the political wing of the Irish Republican Army, and Trimble, whose Ulster Unionist Party is the largest grouping representing Northern Ireland's pro-British Protestant majority.

"I just believe that this visit at this time has been immensely important. It's given confidence to us all to move on. It's given particular confidence, I think, to the Unionist Party and Sinn Féin to make moves that are very beneficial to the process," Ahern said.

Unfortunately for Clinton, the success of his diplomacy risked being overshadowed by new criticism of his extra-marital relationship with Lewinsky, a former White House intern.

Questioned by a reporter, Clinton said for the first time he was sorry about the affair, which has shaken his presidency.

He changed the tone of his remarks a day after Connecticut Democratic Senator Joseph Lieberman said Clinton's behaviour had been "immoral" and called for a fuller acceptance of responsibility.

"I can't disagree with anyone else who wants to be critical of what I have already acknowledged was indefensible," Clinton said.

"I've already said I made a bad mistake and it was

indefensible and I'm sorry," Clinton said.

In another blow to his presidency, Justice Department officials said U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno was reviewing whether to seek an independent counsel to investigate fund-raising activities in Clinton's 1996 reelection campaign.

Clinton said helping to achieve peace in Northern Ireland was particularly important to him because the United States had a responsibility in the post-cold war era to minimise the impact of ethnic, religious, tribal and racial conflicts around the globe.

Echoing comments he made in the Northern Irish town of Armagh Thursday, Clinton said sealing peace in the British-ruled province would set an example to politicians from the Middle East to the Aegean, from the Indian sub-continent to Africa.

"The potential impact of resolving this could wash over many more people than just those that live on this island," Clinton said.

Clinton and Ahern planned to attend a reception together with several hundred people from Ireland's government, business, trade union and farming communities.

Later Friday Clinton was expected to visit a U.S. computer company.

Saturday he visits the western city of Limerick and then plays golf in the western Irish golfing mecca of Ballybunion before flying back to Washington.

United States warns N. Korea against further military tests

TOKYO (AP) — The United States considers North Korea's missile launch over Japan earlier this week a serious threat to Japan's security and has warned the North against carrying out any further launches, a senior official said Friday.

U.S. officials say North Korea test fired a Taepo Dong 1 ballistic missile Monday that flew across northern Japan and crashed into the Pacific Ocean. The first stage, or booster, landed in the Sea of Japan.

The firing was a threat to Japan's national security and the United States would work with its Asian ally to formulate a response to that threat, a senior U.S. defence official said during a trip to Japan Friday.

One measure would likely be an agreement by Japan to join the United States in developing a ballistic missile defence system, said the official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

Also Friday, Japan's defence chief was quoted as saying Japan would not rule out a military strike against North Korea bases if it were under attack by the Communist country.

In response to a reporter's question, Fukushima Nukaga, director general of the defence agency, said a government understanding dating from 1956 permits Japan to carry out such an attack in self-defence, but only as a last resort, if it were under attack, Kyodo News reported.

Japan has long been wary of its Communist neighbour and the missile launch greatly increased fears here about the possibility, however remote, of an attack on Japan.

In an apparent denial of U.S., Japanese and South Korean claims that Monday's launch was a test of a military missile, North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Friday that the country

had successfully put its first satellite in orbit.

The satellite "will contribute to promoting scientific research for peaceful use" and was broadcasting revolutionary hymns praising leader Kim Jong-Il, KCNA said.

Thursday, Japan placed its forces on increased alert when signs emerged that North Korea could be preparing for another launch. Russia's Interfax news agency Friday quoted an unidentified Russian military intelligence source as saying the North was planning a second launch Saturday.

The U.S. defence official refused to say whether a second missile launch was expected.

Japanese officials called Monday's launch the first test for the Taepo Dong 1, a missile capable of striking any part of Japan, including U.S. military bases that are home to some 50,000 American troops.

Planes line Paris avenue in flight commemoration

PARIS (R) — Tourists riding sightseeing buses on Paris' wide Champs-Élysées gawked in surprise Friday when they spotted dozens of planes from World War I fighters to modern attack helicopters parked along the celebrated avenue.

The 50 aircraft, all in mint flying condition, are to be exhibited until Sept. 27 as part of 100th anniversary celebrations of the Aero-Club de France, the country's foremost aviation society.

"The Aero-club de France played a major role in the early days of the history of aviation and this striking exhibit is really a fitting tribute to it," said exhibitor Franklin Devaux.

Officials said the free exhibit was the biggest air show ever held in a city and they expected it would be seen by 3.5 million people.

Devaux, 55, is the proud owner of a PBY Catalina flying boat which he stood

next to while waiting for mechanics to reassemble its dismantled wing and engines. They had been taken off to allow the aircraft to be driven into Paris.

Many of the planes were brought to the city centre by barge along the River Seine and unloaded near the Champs-Élysées.

Only helicopters were allowed to land directly on the avenue although some small fixed-wing aircraft like a replica of the plane flown by Louis Bleriot across the English Channel in 1909 could theoretically have landed on the avenue if allowed.

"My Catalina is not a replica. This is a bona fide war veteran which sank a German U-boat off the coast of Iceland on April 17, 1944, while flying for the Royal Canadian Air Force," Devaux said.

The fanatical air enthusiast said that after the exhibit he would fly the Catalina to Santiago in Chile to commemorate the

efforts of the first pilots, mostly Frenchmen, who flew mail from Europe across the Atlantic and the Andes Mountains to the Pacific Coast of South America some 70 years ago.

Possibly the best-known such pilot was writer-aviator Antoine de Saint-Exupéry of "The Little Prince" fame.

Across the avenue from the Catalina, mechanics from the Dassault firm were assembling a Rafale fighter which is to take over shortly as the main combat aircraft of the French air force.

Further up, its wings folded as if about the be lowered into the hold of an aircraft carrier, was a sleek Corsair fighter-bomber, a mainstay of the U.S. Navy at the end of World War II.

"Truly, some of the planes here are flying legends," sighed Devaux as tourists snapped away with cameras.



Former Rwandan Prime Minister Jean Kambanda listens to the court proceedings at the Rwandan Tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania. The court imposed the maximum sentence of life imprisonment and called the genocide the 'crime of crimes' (Reuters photo)

U.N. tribunal sentences Rwandan to life for genocide

ARUSHA, Tanzania (AP) — In the first sentence by an international court for genocide, a U.N. tribunal Friday ordered a former Rwandan prime minister to serve life in prison for the slaughter of more than 500,000 of his countrymen in 1994.

Jean Kambanda, the highest-ranking former political leader in the tribunal's custody, stood stoically as the three-judge panel rejected his pleas for leniency in order to send a strong signal that genocide will not be tolerated.

"Jean Kambanda abused his authority and the trust of the population," said Chief Judge Laity Kama of Senegal. "Nor has he expressed contrition, regret, or sympathy for the victims in Rwanda even when given the opportunity."

Gasps of relief rippled through the audience, many of whom were Rwandans who survived the three-month killing frenzy. They had waited nearly four years for the tribunal, which has been troubled by mismanagement and corruption, to sentence its first convict.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda said the sentencing of Kambanda, 42, was the first for the crime of genocide by an international court.

All those accused in the post-World War II Nuremberg trials pleaded innocent to charges including murder and extermination.

The trials pre-dated the creation of the crime of genocide 50 years ago. Kambanda had sought two years or nothing in exchange for recording 90 hours of incriminating evidence against other alleged authors of blood-bath and for pleading guilty.

On May 1, the former banker confessed to six counts of genocide and crimes against humanity, including responsibility for the murder and extermination of civilians. He was the first person to accept culpability for genocide before an international court.

Defence lawyer Oliver Michael Inglis, who had expected a sentence of up to 15 years, said he would appeal. He contended Kambanda was a puppet, manipulated by a powerful and evil military, and afraid dissent would cost him his life.

Prosecutor Bernard Muna, who had argued that no amount of evidence against others could offset such wrongdoing, said it was an "exemplary sentence. But I am afraid it might dissuade others from coming forward to plead guilty."

Muna said the prosecution pledged only to protect Kambanda's wife and two children in exchange for his cooperation.

"Justice has been done by imprisoning Mr. Kambanda," Joy Makanyange, Rwanda's ambassador to Tanzania, said outside the courtroom. "This is a historic event."

Kambanda, slight and bearded, is a reviled figure in Rwanda. Many are haunted by memories of him dressed in fatigues and handing out weapons to Hutu civilians to hunt down and kill "Tutsi cockroaches."

His crimes "carry an intrinsic gravity, and their widespread, atrocious and systematic character is particularly shocking to the human conscience," Kama said, reading the judgement.

Kambanda committed those crimes knowingly and with premeditation, and most gravely he

betrayed his duties as prime minister to protect Rwanda citizens, Kama said.

Kambanda is accused of inciting massacres, ordering roadblocks to help round up of Tutsis, and presiding over meetings of his hard-line Hutu government as it planned and tallied the massacres, Kama said.

More than 500,000 Rwandans, mostly minority Tutsis but also moderate Hutus, were butchered with machetes and nail-studded clubs in the carefully orchestrated genocide.

The killing began April 7, 1994, the day after President Juvenal Habyarimana plane's was shot down and two days before Kambanda was named prime minister to replace a woman who was assassinated.

Kambanda fled Rwanda when Tutsi rebels seized power in July 1994 and was arrested in Nairobi three years later with six other high-level officials.

A life sentence is the maximum that can be imposed by the U.N. tribunal, based in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha.

Rwanda has carried out its own prosecutions. In April, Rwandan firing squads executed 22 people convicted of genocide, the first executions in connection with the genocide.

Kambanda was ordered held for now at a U.N. prison in Arusha. The judges have not yet determined where convicted should serve their terms. At least four European countries have volunteered to take prisoners, but the tribunal prefers that they remain in Africa.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pope criticises use of force in Congo

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (AP) — Pope John Paul II criticised Friday the attempt at achieving a "military solution" in the Congo, telling bishops from Zimbabwe that such use of force will only cause further grievances and injustice. Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe has sent 3,000 troops into the Congo, backing President Laurent Kabila in a war against rebels. Angola and Namibia have also sent troops to help Kabila. John Paul decried the spread of armed conflict "in various parts of Africa, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo." "Yours is a peaceful nation," he told the visiting Roman Catholic bishops from Zimbabwe. "You must work to keep it so by reminding your people that a military solution to profound social and economic problems will always be an illusion and will be the cause of further grievances and injustices." Discussing Zimbabwe's problems, one of the bishops said that AIDS is expected to create more than a million orphans by 2000. "It is more than just a medical problem. It indeed needs a more radical approach of instilling moral values in our people," said Bishop Alexio Churu Muchabaiwa in his address during the meeting at the pope's vacation palace in the Alban Hills south of Rome.

Taiwanese politicians buying votes with Viagra

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Impotence drug Viagra has become the gift of choice of Taiwanese politicians looking to win support at the polls from voters, a newspaper reported Friday. Candidates in rural Taiwan, where vote buying has long been rife, are offering influential figures in their local political machines bottles of the little blue pills, the Independence Evening News reported. Viagra has not yet been approved for sale in Taiwan, and smuggled pills — in demand for the much vaunted boost they give to sexual performance — sell on the black market at up to four times their U.S. price. The higher value bestowed by their illicit status has made the pills a favourite among those who control votes, pushing aside imported liquor, cigarettes and good old fashioned cash, the report said. Viagra is already being smuggled in such quantities that Taiwan's Health Department has been compelled to produce a public service announcement reminding television viewers that the drug's importation can be punished with up to seven years in prison and a fine of 150,000 Taiwan dollars (\$4,285). The department is still studying reports of the drug's side effects from the United States and other countries where it is legal, said Hu You-Pu, head of the department's pharmaceuticals division.

U.N. rights chief plays down expectations of China visit

GENEVA (AP) — The United Nations' top human rights official played down expectations Friday of her forthcoming trip to China, giving few details of her programme beyond meetings with authorities. Mary Robinson said she hoped to "interact as far as possible with the civil society in China" during her week-long official visit starting Monday but declined to elaborate on who she will meet. "Clearly, part of not wishing to have unrealistic expectations is that a visit of this kind cannot address all of the issues that are issues of concern," the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights told a news conference. Robinson will meet Chinese President Jiang Zemin and deputy premier Qian Qichen on Sept. 14. Meetings with legal officials, lawmakers, women's groups and academics are also on her programme. Next Thursday, she travels to Tibet. There is "still some work to be done" on the planning of the visit, Robinson said. She is expected to spend two days there meeting authorities, local officials and "religious authorities and groups." For years China has been condemned by the West and human rights groups for suppressing dissent. In an attempt to blunt that criticism, the government this year said it would sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, meant to guarantee individual liberties. It has also released some well-known political prisoners. Human rights organisations are particularly concerned about the clampdown on the independence movement in Tibet. The Chinese seized the mountainous territory in 1950 and have ruled it as a province of China ever since. Given Chinese sensitivities over criticism of its rights record, U.N. officials are anxious not to ruffle Beijing's feathers. It is the first time the U.N. human rights chief has visited the country. Officials hope it will mark the start of a gradual process towards improved cooperation and understanding. Robinson said her visit should be seen as such a beginning. She will be encouraging the government to sign the civil and political rights covenant and signing a memorandum on technical cooperation with China.

Common painkiller may help lung cancer patients

LONDON (R) — A common over-the-counter painkiller could be a key ingredient in a new cocktail of drugs to improve treatment of lung cancer patients, British doctors said Friday. They are testing ibuprofen to see if the anti-inflammatory drug could help to prevent involuntary weight loss, a serious problem for many cancer patients. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide. Surgery is the only cure but many patients are diagnosed too late and cannot be operated on. "Finding new ways to improve the quality of life of these patients enjoy, while the disease is managed, is of great importance," said Dr. John Toy, director of clinical programmes for Britain's Cancer Research Campaign which is funding trials on lung cancer patients. A combination of ibuprofen and megestrol acetate, a steroid drug used to treat breast cancer patients, reduced weight loss and improved the appetite of people with stomach cancer when it was given in trials. Dr. Donald McMillan of Glasgow Royal Infirmary will now test the drug combination and ibuprofen alone in a three-year study to see if either option works for 260 lung cancer sufferers. "It has been recognised for some time that following the administration of megestrol acetate a significant proportion of advanced breast cancer patients gain weight," McMillan said in a statement. "However, the findings in similar studies of patients with advanced gastrointestinal and lung cancer have been disappointing, but focusing on the inflammation produced by these tumours may be the key." Nearly half of patients suffering from liver, colon, brain and stomach cancers experience varying degrees of weight loss. McMillan described the inflammation caused by the tumour as a wound that does not heal. The body keeps reacting and other health problems begin. "Although no one knows why these other problems kick in, we do know that progressive weight loss is associated with poor prognosis in cancer patients," he added.

Haemorrhagic fever epidemic threatens flood-hit China

BEIJING (AFP) — The health department of China's heavily flood-damaged northeastern Heilongjiang province has issued an emergency circular putting affected areas on guard for an epidemic of haemorrhagic fever, the Xinhua news agency said Friday.

The population of mice, which carry the deadly disease through parasite hosts such as mites, has risen sharply in flooded areas, it said.

"So many regions in the province face the danger of an outbreak," a ministry of health official was quoted as saying. Men in their prime are most likely to contract haemorrhagic fever, an

often fatal condition for which there is no effective treatment, he said.

A programme to exterminate mice was due to start, Xinhua said.

Health ministry officials have warned the entire northeast faces "mounting danger from a possible major outbreak of epidemics," with 500,000 left homeless by the floods still sleeping in makeshift accommodations in Heilongjiang alone.

Crowded, unsanitary conditions in refugee camps as well as the spread of human sewage by floodwaters have put health authorities on top alert, with outbreaks of typhoid and cholera

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A rescue and recovery worker aboard a boat picks up a piece of the fuselage of Swissair Flight 111 and places it on a dock at Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia as boats return with debris recovered from the sea. All 229 passengers and crew are believed to have been killed when the jet crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off Nova Scotia (Reuters photo)

From Europe and New York, grieving families head to crash site

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia (AP) — Grief-stricken families from Europe and the United States flew to the rocky coast of Nova Scotia Friday to face the task of identifying remains pulled out of the Atlantic, where Swissair Flight 111 crashed into fragments.

Canadian officials Friday brought in the 60-metre submarine HMCS Okanagan, signalling that they were preparing to shift gears from a massive rescue operation into a search and salvage mission.

While rescue boats searched through the inky blackness all night in stormy conditions, the submarine began scouring the area with sonar at 5 a.m. So far, authorities reported no results.

"We have not yet received any signal yet from the body of the aircraft," Benoit Bouchard, head of the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, said Friday. "Last night, investigators did not have much to look at. That should come soon, today or tomorrow, if we get the black boxes."

Nothing larger than the size of a car has been found so far. Lt. Cmdr. Jacques Fauteux, a spokesman for the rescue operation, said.

As authorities drew up plans to protect the mourners' privacy, details emerged from far-flung

places about the array of distinguished professionals who were among the 229 people killed in Wednesday night's disaster.

Brilliant doctors, high-powered executives, risk-taking relief workers were among the dead. Seven victims were affiliated with the United Nations.

Thursday, 137 Americans were reported to be on the flight, but Swissair said Friday that a reexamination of the passenger list has found there were only 132 Americans.

Offshore from the quaint fishing village of Peggy's Cove, an intensive search continued for bodies and remnants of the MD-11 jumbo jet that crashed after its pilots reported smoke in the cockpit.

"It's likely to be a bad week here," said Ray Boutilier, 72, a lifelong seaman. "You never know what you're going to bring up in your nets."

Officials estimated Thursday night that 60 bodies had been recovered and taken to a morgue at a military base outside Halifax. They said none appeared to be burned, indicating there was no explosion or large fire.

About a dozen grieving family members, clutching one another for support, silently filed through Halifax International Airport late Thursday.

Swissair said more than 110 relatives and helpers were expected Friday on a special flight from Switzerland, and others were coming from New York.

A secluded area at Peggy's Cove, barricaded from journalists, was set up so mourners could look out over the ocean and watch boats and aircraft search.

Swissair also announced it would pay \$20,000 in immediate financial aid to families who requested it.

In Dublin, Ireland, U.S. President Bill Clinton pledged U.S. support Friday for Canadian rescue workers and said the 229 victims and their families "are very much in our thoughts and prayers."

The MD-11 dropped off radar screens about 90 minutes after leaving New York's Kennedy International Airport late Wednesday on its way to Geneva.

After a normal takeoff, the crew reported smoke in the cockpit and decided to turn back to Boston. They were told the Halifax airport was much closer, but they never made it, crashing into the ocean 50 kilometres south of Halifax after dumping much of their fuel.

Keith Anderson of the Canadian Air Traffic Association said Swissair pilot Urs Zimmermann talked several times with a

control centre in Moncton, New Brunswick, before the crash.

"The initial call was to report smoke in the cockpit and the captain indicated an abnormal situation," Anderson said. "He used the term PAN which implies an emergency situation, but not a desperate situation."

Swissair said Friday that the pilots put out a "dense smoke" call before the "PAN" call, but nothing indicated whether there was smoke in the passenger cabin, how dense it was or what caused it.

Divers were preparing to search the sea floor for the plane's flight recorders, which officials hope will shed light on the cause of the crash.

Canadian and U.S. officials said there were no indications that the crash resulted from sabotage or a terrorist act, but investigators were not ruling anything out. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police called in explosives experts to examine debris for signs of a possible bomb blast.

Vernon Grose, a former National Transportation Safety Board investigator, told NBC-TV Friday that the size of the debris being found may indicate that Flight 111 hit the water at a small angle, instead of plunging headfirst.

Russian parliament postpones vote on Chernomyrdin

MOSCOW (AP) — The Duma postponed a confirmation vote on the acting prime minister Friday, avoiding a confrontation with President Boris Yeltsin as pressure mounted on hard-line lawmakers to back down.

Lawmakers voted 294-54 to postpone the vote after parliament leaders said Yeltsin had called for more talks.

The Duma had been expected Friday to reject acting Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin for a second time.

The decision to postpone the vote until Monday indicated the hard-liners were no longer confident of winning their confrontation with Yeltsin and may be looking for a way out. The postponement was likely to boost Chernomyrdin's chances of approval.

Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov insisted his faction would never approve Chernomyrdin and would not agree to a compromise with Yeltsin. But the Communists abstained from the vote, indicating their position might be crumbling.

"We are not going to vote for Viktor Stepanovich (Chernomyrdin). We believe he won't be able to handle this job," Zyuganov said.

The dramatic turnaround came after Chernomyrdin's hopes of being approved received a boost Friday when the Federation

Council, the upper chamber of parliament, passed a non-binding motion 91-17 expressing confidence in the acting premier.

The Duma's agreement to more talks with Yeltsin boosted Chernomyrdin's hopes of approval. Yeltsin still retains enormous power and had appeared to regain the political initiative in the past few days.

Russia had been plunged in to crisis by the collapse of the currency, the ruble, and a power struggle between the Duma and Yeltsin. Russians have been deeply worried, but there has been no sign of panic or unrest.

Speaking earlier, Chernomyrdin outlined measures to stem the country's economic crisis and said the government would allow the ruble to float freely, allowing market forces to determine its value. He also said the government would press ahead with market reforms as soon as the situation was stabilized.

"Starting in January the government will introduce an economic dictatorship — enterprises will be put in the conditions under which they will not be able to fail under their obligations," he told the Federation Council, made up of the country's regional governors.

The Duma rejected Chernomyrdin Monday in a first vote. His approval could ease the political

instability reigning over Russia, though it would not end the nation's economic distress.

The opposition says it will never approve Chernomyrdin, accusing him of creating many of the current problems during his previous five years in the job. Yeltsin has said he will accept no one else.

The Federation Council vote to back Chernomyrdin was only symbolic, but it may have increased pressure on the Duma to find a compromise. The governors who make up the Council have huge power in their regions and the vote signalled they would back Yeltsin in a showdown.

Just last month, the ruble was trading at 6.2 to the dollar, or about 16 cents. Friday, two days after the government said it was powerless to control the crashing currency, the U.S. dollar was close to 18 rubles in street trading.

Chernomyrdin warned that a quick solution to the political crisis must be found.

"It may be our last chance to build a normal economy in Russia. Yes, our actions will be unpopular. Everyone will assail us. But don't tie the government's hands, give us time to step back from the precipice. That refers to everyone from the president on down," he said.

Chernomyrdin said his economic rescue package

would concentrate on meeting unpaid wages and pensions, closing down bankrupt and inefficient businesses, getting rid of officials, and lowering taxes. He said the government would use hard currency reserves to back the value of the ruble.

"We will have prices rising. The ruble rate will be falling."

But since every ruble will be insured by our hard currency reserves, the rate will stabilise," he said.

Yeltsin met briefly Friday with Chernomyrdin and said he would not accept any other candidate for premier, Kremlin officials said. The president may be willing to give the Duma more consultative powers on appointing ministers, they added.

The defence ministry issued a statement Friday denying that troops were being moved in to Moscow because of the political situation.

If the Duma rejects Chernomyrdin on the second vote, Yeltsin has the option of proposing him a third time, or choosing a new candidate. If the Duma votes no for a third time, Yeltsin can call new Duma elections.

Russia has been operating with an interim government since Yeltsin fired the previous prime minister on Aug. 23 and named Chernomyrdin acting prime minister.

Serb troops battle separatist guerrillas in Kosovo

PRISTINA, Serbia (R) — Serb troops battled separatist guerrillas in Western Kosovo Friday as the province's main ethnic Albanian leader urged them to allow humanitarian aid to get to tens of thousands of refugees.

Ibrahim Rugova, leader of the largest ethnic Albanian political party, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), told a news conference a transitional political settlement was needed to end the violence in the Serb province and reach a final solution.

"The possibility of reaching an interim accord, the accord that will last for three years, is being considered," Rugova said.

Western nations have been coaxing the two sides towards the negotiating table to agree an end to the seven months of fighting, which has claimed the lives of at least 500 people and displaced 265,000, most of them from the ethnic

Albanian majority. "We urge that the delivery of humanitarian aid to the people sheltering in the hills is not hindered by Serb forces," Rugova said.

A senior Western diplomat said Wednesday the Serbs and ethnic Albanians had agreed a procedural breakthrough, putting aside the vexed issue of the final status of Kosovo, that could open the way for substantive peace talks.

Rugova said an interim accord should stabilise the situation in Kosovo and create a minimum precondition for a final political settlement.

He said Serb police and military were continuing their attacks against the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) throughout Kosovo, particularly around Prizren in the south and Decani in the west, as well as in the central Drenica region.

The Serb media centre in Pristina said there was fighting

between police and the KLA around Oraovac Friday.

It said a policeman was seriously wounded in the area Thursday, when journalists reported seeing several houses in flames around Oraovac.

The media centre said the villages of Ljubecevo and Jeskevo near the southern city of Prizren, where Reuters reporters heard mortar shelling Thursday, were now quiet.

It quoted municipal authorities in Prizren as saying that Albanian extremists suffered considerable losses and large quantities of weapons and ammunition were captured in the operation around Prizren earlier in the week.

The Albanian-language daily Koha Ditore reported that four Albanians were killed in Prizren area Thursday, including a five-year boy. The daily also said that five people were killed near Klinja.

Serb sources reported continued fighting Friday morning

around the main Pristina to Pec road, near Klinja.

They said clashes also occurred in the villages of Drenovac and Rausic near the road linking Pec and Djakovica.

Koha Ditore said up to 40 Yugoslav army tanks had taken up positions near Podujevo, north of Pristina. But Serb sources said they were part of an army outpost set up when the conflict began seven months ago. They said there had been no clashes in the area.

The daily said some 80,000 refugees have been sheltered in the region of Pec. Another local daily, Bujku, said that up to 400,000 people have been driven from their homes since the fighting started.

International aid workers have warned of a humanitarian disaster if nothing is done for the refugees before winter.

Castro says inequality still plagues S. Africa

CAPE TOWN (R) — Cuba's revolutionary leader Fidel Castro, on a two-day state visit to South Africa, said Friday inequality was still rife in the country despite the triumph of his friend President Nelson Mandela over apartheid.

"Today there are still two South Africas, which we must not call the black and the white as this terminology must forever be dropped if you want to create a multiracial and unified country," Castro told South Africa's parliament.

"I would prefer to say it in another way — two South Africas, the rich and the poor," Castro said to loud applause.

"One where the average family receives 12 times the income of the other," he said. "One where life expectancy is 73 years, the other just 56 years."

But Castro said he did not want to stir up discontent among those who had not yet won equal opportunities for all despite long years of anti-apartheid struggle and said many countries shared South Africa's problems.

"The political miracle of unity, reconciliation and peace, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, could end up

being an example without precedent in history," he said. Mandela earlier gave Castro a warm welcome at his offices, where the Communist leader inspected a guard of honour from the army that once faced Cuban soldiers in Angola for 15 years during a cold war conflict.

Castro, wearing a dark suit and tie, later walked arm-in-arm with Mandela through the garden of his office to greet foreign and local tourists at the gate, who were standing in the rain to meet the two leaders.

Mandela told the enthusiastic tourists: "This is one of my greatest friends."

Castro, who will later visit Robben Island, the prison off Cape Town where Mandela spent 19 of his 27 years in jail for opposing apartheid, said the South African president was a figure recognised now even by his former jailers.

"Nelson Mandela will not go down in history for the 27 consecutive years spent in prison without abandoning his ideals, but for being able to remove all the poison from his soul created by such unjust incarceration," he said.

Movement summit in the South African port city of Durban.

While Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC) and its Communist alliance partners have strong ties with Cuba, South African opposition parties have condemned Castro's visit.

The National Party, which ruled for 46 years before the first all-race election in 1994, said that Castro represented the "evil, outdated, discredited Communist ideology."

The liberal Democratic Party and the white right-wing Freedom Front boycotted his address and the NP's members were the only ones to remain seated as parliamentarians and a packed public gallery rose to cheer the Cuban president.

Earlier, several hundred trade unionists and members of the South African Communist Party, said to be the only Communist party in the world with a rising membership, gathered outside parliament to greet Castro, waving banners reading "Cuba Si, Yankee no" and "Workers welcome people's hero."

The ANC said in a statement that it appreciated Cuba's past opposition to apartheid and its sending of tens of thousands

of troops from 1976 to 1991 to fight Angolan rebels backed by South Africa's former white minority government.

During that time South Africa ruled Namibia and supported the then rebel UNITA movement against Angola's Marxist government, which was backed by Cuba.

"The Cuban people's support for our struggle was unprecedented... by laying down their lives and spilling their blood on our own African soil," ANC member Tony Yengeni told parliament in a welcome to Castro.

In his speech to parliament, Castro also lashed out at current chaos in financial markets he said was created by unfettered capitalist free markets.

"In a world converted into a casino, speculative operations... are conducted every day, with no relation to the real economy," he said. "Sooner or later the world is going to have to pay the price."

Castro was to be hosted by Mandela at a state banquet later Friday, before travelling to Johannesburg Saturday to meet members of the local Cuban community and visit a memorial in Soweto commemorating the 1976 uprising against apartheid.

Indonesia to set up 'national reconciliation' team

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia is setting up a "national reconciliation team" to address separatist and ethnic tensions, Justice Minister Muladi said Friday.

"National reconciliation is very important to foster integration and combat the threat of separatism and disintegration in society," Muladi told reporters after a meeting with President B.J. Habibie.

"Greater regional autonomy will curb separatist pressure because provinces will be given wider autonomy except in security and defence, foreign relations, monetary policy and the law," Muladi said he would take part in the reconciliation team along with Armed Forces chief General Wiranto and several members of the

National Commission on Human Rights, including its deputy chairman Marzuki Darusman.

Tensions in Indonesia have flared as the country's descent into poverty worsens. Thousands of ethnic Chinese have fled the country after being targeted in fierce rioting in Indonesian cities in mid-May.

Rioting broke out last week in the restive province of Aceh, amid allegations that a nine-year army crackdown in the province involved widespread human rights abuses. Two people were killed in the town of Lhokseumawe when security forces fired on rioters.

Separatist protests have also mounted in the provinces of East Timor and Irian Jaya

since former president Suharto resigned on May 21 amid a deep economic depression and widespread protests against his 32-year rule.

Darusman told reporters that he saw no signs of social disintegration in Indonesia. He said his meeting with cabinet ministers had been dominated by the issue of Aceh.

The human rights commission unearthed scores of bones in Aceh last month at suspected mass grave sites for army victims.

In a subsequent report, it said 3,000 Acehese women had been widowed during an army crackdown which began in 1989.

Wiranto has disputed the figure, and Darusman said the armed forces chief had

told the meeting that 111 armed forces members, 406 separatist guerrillas and 243 civilians had died in Aceh during military operations there.

Muladi said the events in Aceh, in northern Sumatra, were an example of a cycle of revenge involving guerrillas, the army and the population, and Indonesia must strive to avoid a repeat of such problems.

Indonesia has suggested giving East Timor "special status" involving widespread autonomy to settle an international dispute on the future of the territory. Aceh already has special status within Indonesia, but in the past this has not been translated into significant autonomy.

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Balancing the powers

THE REEMERGING debate about the propriety of appointing senators and deputies to ministerial posts is an indication of how vibrant our political system is in its quest for a proper system of checks and balances.

Some parliamentarians, angered by their exclusion from government, are demanding the resignation of senators recently appointed to ministerial positions. Others have threatened to withhold confidence from a promising new Cabinet if senators do resign because they regard this as the "institutionalisation" of exclusion.

Since confidence voting is not far in the offing, this debate requires our urgent attention.

The argument that deputies who serve as ministers cannot possibly fulfill their mission as the "people's representatives" may hold some sway, although not much.

However, the argument that parliamentarians seek their seats solely to eventually hold ministerial posts and enjoy all the perks without having to bear any responsibility is an extremely shallow one, not to mention an insult to parliamentarians.

The Lower House, especially during the past months, has demonstrated an extreme concern for the public well-being, and tried, to the greatest extent possible, to hold the government well accountable for its actions, and herein lies the heart of the matter.

Simply, if a separation of power were to be institutionalised, the public would be denied the opportunity to be served by a government elected by the people and the opportunity to hold governments accountable when necessary.

Had recent governments included elected representatives, perhaps those officials would have thought twice about abusing their authority or misleading the public.

Although the Constitution does not specifically state that the government must be comprised of elected officials, some articles imply that it can be. In the 1950s, most governments were mainly formed from elected deputies.

We therefore think that if a separation of powers is to be institutionalised, a way of electing officials should be introduced.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Dustour's Jihad Mohammi commented on the efforts by the government to combat the chronic unemployment problem in Jordan. The writer praised the idea that the government questions itself, which, according to Mohammi paves the way for a concrete solution to the rampant problem. He said Jordanians from all walks of life would appreciate the government move, even if the upcoming conference did not solve the crisis. The writer charged that corruption and preferentialism are two of the main causes of unemployment in Jordan — officially at 15 per cent, but 27 per cent by some unofficial accounts. The writer urged the government to make a list of people having more than one job before the National Employment Conference starts, in order to take these jobs away from them and give them to the jobless. He also suggested a minimum wage law to be forced on the private sector. The minimum wage is an efficient solution which also contributes to obliterating the culture of shame, charged Mohammi.

Al Ra'i's Fahed Faneh called on the government to reduce bread prices after wheat prices went down in the international markets. The government should now make the bread price 16 piasters and cancel the direct financial bread subsidies. Faneh advised the Tarawneh government to take the initiative, especially now, in its "honeymoon" period. Faneh criticised the principle of direct bread subsidies. Bread must be sold like any other good, dependant on world market prices, he said. The direct subsidy is considered a burden on the treasury, and will make consumers spendthrift, he added. Faneh said the bread subsidies were only created in order to make the rise in prices of bread more palatable to the general public.

Jordanian Perspective

Weizman's brave call for elections

Dr. Musa Keilani

ISRAELI PRESIDENT Ezer Weizman may have broken "all rules" by calling for early elections as charged by supporters of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, but he was only stating the obvious by favouring a political change in the country.

Netanyahu came to power on a "peace with security" platform two years ago, but he has been able to secure neither peace nor stability for his people. An internal issue for Israel as it might be, but there cannot be any denial of the fact that the Arab World has given up all hope to work out a peace agreement with Israel as long as Netanyahu remains in power.

As such, the Arab mood has everything to do with the "peace and security" that Netanyahu is unable to deliver to his people.

The reality today is that the Arab World, having been frustrated by Netanyahu's approach despite all Arab efforts in good faith for peace based on international legitimacy, sees a political change in Israel as the only hope for the restoration of security and stability in the region based on recognition and respect for the rights of all.

As such, any signs of political discord in Israel suggesting early elections that could lead to the demise from power of Netanyahu and his likes is closely watched by the Arab World, and indeed Washington, which has been indicating that it is also frustrated with the stalling tactics adopted by the Netanyahu camp.

But how realistic is any hope for a political change in Israel? Weizman is highly respected in Israel, but he does not have the political clout or influence to convince those elements who matter in his country in

terms of bringing about early elections. But he has the visionary power to realise and accept that without recognising and respecting some of the key demands of the Palestinians, his countrymen are doomed to live in perpetual fear and instability. Furthermore, he also seems to have realised that the course adopted by Netanyahu may bring in good but short-term advantages for the State of Israel, but that there is no future for that course in the medium and long term perspective.

Weizman's courage to speak out without reservations is well appreciated among Israelis, who also respect the elderly statesman. That makes Weizman one of the few people in Israel today who can actually launch the idea of serious political changes.

His meeting last week with Ehud Barak, leader of the opposition Labor Party, was also taken by many as his endorsement of Barak as the next possible prime minister of Israel. While it is debatable that whether an Israel under Barak might be more positive towards meeting the prerequisites of peace, it is abundantly clear that a Labour Party which is loyal to the memory of its former leader, Yitzhak Rabin, will definitely drop some of the no-go conditions that Netanyahu is seeking to attach to any agreement with the Palestinians.

Weizman has strongly asserted that Israel is in crisis, and not many Israeli voters would disagree with him. Apart from the political crisis with the Palestinians, Israel faces a host of internal problems. The economy has been slipping and unemployment has been rising. Businesses are badly affected, and many Israeli exporters blame Netanyahu for spoiling their chances

of doing business with the Arab World by his moves that have frozen most Arab-Israeli contacts, particularly with some of the wealthy Gulf Arab states.

Obviously, Weizman has sensed that the time is right for him to break the truce he had made with Netanyahu not to make public criticism of the prime minister and has moved ahead with stepped-up political contacts aimed at bringing the elections closer. That there is already a bill in the Knesset calling for early elections works in his favour. That the bill, which was accepted in preliminary reading in July, needs three successive Knesset votes to be adopted, but all similar drafts in the past have always been adopted by the Israeli legislature.

What the Israeli political scene needs today is an intensification of campaign by people who really believe that peace is possible with the Arabs if Israel is ready to accept international legitimacy and what hawkish Israelis and some Western media organisations describe as "concessions" to the Arabs are only rectifications of abnormalities like forcible occupation of other people's land and rejection of the legitimate political rights of other people.

It is in this perspective that many Jordanians view the role of Israeli embassies in Cairo and Amman which, in Jordan's case, is headed by Dr. Oded Eran, a career ambassador of excellent calibre, with well placed connections, highly qualified to influence decision making in Israel, at this crucial critical time.

LETTERS

Fighting terrorism — U.S. style

To the editor:

THE UNITED STATES claimed that its intelligence agencies had substantial evidence that the targets in Sudan and Afghanistan were terrorist-related prior to its decision to strike. At least two other Western powers, Britain and Germany, accepted this claim without hesitation.

Thus all protests against the American attack on these two sovereign Muslim states may be considered unreasonable. After all, surely the two great powers, i.e. America and Britain, could not be wrong. They never are, otherwise they wouldn't be superpowers.

By all political and material considerations, the U.S., the sole superpower and the 'great champion of human rights,' seems to possess the unquestionable right, the will and unchallenged power to strike sites and individuals anywhere in the world considered a threat to American security and its citizens.

Muslims all over the world are grateful to the U.S. president for the clarification that these attacks are not against Islam. Rightly so, because they are against Muslim states. After all, a strike on America cannot be considered an attack on Christianity.

Isn't it time to redefine terrorism and rewrite history?

Dr. Masud Ahmad Malik,
 Amman, Jordan.



Illiteracy tops concern in busy week for press

Reviewed by Mohammad Ben Hussein

Local columnists last week discussed illiteracy in the Arab World, the stand-off between Iraq and the United States, the Lockerbie file, the global stock market meltdown.

Al Ra'i's Fahed Faneh discussed the backwardness of the Arab World, which threatens to erode Arab identity unless culture and education are rejuvenated. Illiteracy — of thought, culture and reading skills — are the true enemy of Arab identity, said Faneh. The writer ruled out any possibility that the Western cultural invasion could jeopardise our culture as much as illiteracy. According to a UNESCO report published in 1996, there are an estimated 105 million illiterate Arab, 38 per cent of the Arab population. In 2010 the number will be 120 million, which is a horrifying phenomenon, even if the rate of illiteracy were to drop to 33 per cent. Population growth in the Arab World is so rapid that the educational system is unable to cope. Every single morning, the Arab World witnesses 15,000 births, 5,000 of whom will not attend schools. Faneh pointed out that cultural illiteracy could be worse. Those who can read, however rarely read books or any source of knowledge, said Faneh. What the average Arab individual reads pales in comparison to what the average Japanese does: the average Japanese reads 144 times more reading material than the average Arab. Faneh charged that most of those who read books in the Arab world choose material discussing the history and the days of Arab glory, which, according to the writer, does not educate, but stagnates. He said the cultural gap in the Arab World is filled by works of other nations. The Arab identity is lost in the Western culture. Another

related problem is Arab intellectuals who live in a dilemma between their society and the regime. The government oppresses him if he rebels against it, and the society rejects him if he dares to challenge its deep-rooted beliefs, said Faneh.

Al Dustour's Jihad Momani discussed the recent developments in the Lockerbie file. Libya gained victory in its position with the United Nations, the U.S. and Britain. The U.S. and its ally Britain finally accepted the trial of suspected Libyan bombers in a third country. The writer did not rule out that a deal between Tripoli and Washington was the base for this initiative. The writer expected that Abu Nidal is the price that Libya is paying to end sanctions imposed on the country for ten years. He said the Libyan leadership has the right to negotiate secretly with the U.S. in order to save its people from further sanctions. The Libyan-American deal was much better than other deals cut in the region, said Momani. He said Abu Nidal would not be much safer if he was in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) areas, because according to the Oslo accords, the PNA is committed to crackdown on any anti-Israel movement, and Abu Nidal would not be exempt from this agreement. The writer said the sacrifice of one person is a cheap price

invaded, the U.S. would stand still, because there is no country that can afford its army. Jaber noted that the Iranian influence in the region is another stabilising factor in the region.

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compared to plight of a whole nation.

Al Dustour in its editorial discussed Israeli measures to Judaize occupied Jerusalem and lashed out at Arab and Islamic Nations for not reacting positively. While the radical groups of the Israeli right-wing want to occupy Al Aqsa Mosque gates, the Arab and Islamic worlds are expressing their condemnations and rejections to these acts. Israeli gangs will continue destroying Al Aqsa Mosque, unless Arabs and Muslims take serious action against them. Al Dustour slammed Israeli Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu for dispatching soldiers to Al Aqsa's gates in order to take control of the Islamic site. Al Dustour called on the Arab and Islamic World to act quickly to halt Israeli measures which aspire to destroy the Islamic holy sight.

Al Ra'i's Fahed Faneh commented on the meltdown of the world's stock markets last week inspired by the economic crisis hitting Russia. The Russian crisis led to a severe drop in ruble's exchange rate and the instability of the economic and political situation in the country. Faneh said that, luckily, these events have not affected the Amman Financial Market. According to Faneh the indirect and weak economic relations between Amman and Moscow, and low stock market prices in the Amman market protected the AFM. Faneh expected that stocks prices in the AFM will begin to rise after five years of deterioration. It only needs a spark, he added. But events in Russia and the rest of the former Soviet Union as well as East Asia negatively affect the trade volume in the rest of the world. Jordan exports to these countries did retreat, added Faneh.

Week
 in
 print

Bankers see cheaper funds from CBJ to IDB and ACC spurring investment

By Soleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) has provided cheaper credit to specialist financing bodies to spur investment, which has been slowed by tight monetary policy to defend the dinar, bankers said Thursday.

Bankers said the Central Bank will provide 30 million dinars (\$42 million) of cheaper credit in addition to an existing 10 million dinars already granted to the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) to lend at preferential rates to investors in industry, agriculture and tourism.

"It will help encourage financing of industrial and tourism projects by making

available debt financing at lower rates," Tayseer Wahbeh, deputy general manager of the Jordan Industrial Development Bank, told Reuters.

The Central Bank will also provide another extra 10 million dinars of credit lines to the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC), the state-run body providing cheap loans to farmers. Officials said the move should ease effects of a tight monetary policy on stagnant business after a four percentage point interest rate hike to bolster the dinar.

It was prompted by a spate of dollar buying in the local market which started early last month on concerns over King Hussein's health, which have since eased.

The interest rate hikes widened the difference between the dinar and dollar interest yields to more than four percentage points. Many industrialists blame a high interest rate policy for sluggish growth in some industrial sectors because of the high cost of borrowing which has dampened investment.

Bankers say the injection of cheaper credit, even at such modest levels, should have a positive ripple effect on growth.

"The availability of the 40 million dinars on a revolving basis will have a multiplier effect in providing less costly funding to spur growth," said senior banker Mufleh Agel.

The economy is forecast to post modest growth this year. Gross domestic prod-

uct (GDP) grew just 0.8 per cent in 1996 and 2.2 per cent last year.

As part of its move, the Central Bank lowered lending rate ceilings offered by the Industrial Development Bank to a maximum of 10.0 per cent on fixed assets against 11.5 per cent previously, and to 10.5 per cent on working capital against a previous 12.00 per cent.

This compares favourably with between 12 to 15 per cent lending costs charged by Jordan's private commercial banks.

The bank, under a special statute, has tax breaks which are not allowed to other private banks, in return for provision of low-cost and medium- and long-term loans to industrialists through its access to cheap-

er central bank funding. Although bankers say the credit will be available only for projects and not to firms suffering from liquidity problems, the move is expected to encourage investors to undertake projects currently on hold due to prohibitive borrowing costs.

The specialist bank is 12 per cent owned by the government, with the rest of its capital held by Jordan's major banks, foreign, local institutional and private investors.

Jordan's commercial banks shy away from providing long-term credit and most loans are for less than five years, while the Industrial Development Bank provides up to 10 years with two years' grace.

World Bank chief says development requires participation of several sectors

From Ghali Alul in Marrakesh

WORLD BANK President James Wolfensohn has said that economic development is not a job for one global body alone but requires participation of several sectors, including civil society and elected government.

"We have concluded in our institution that we cannot do this alone. We need a four-way partnership with international institutions, business and the private sector, civil society, and elected governments," Wolfensohn said Thursday.

The World Bank official was addressing the opening session here of the second Mediterranean Development Forum (MDF).

The MDF, which brought together more than 400 senior government officials, members of the private sector, academics, practitioners, and representatives from non-governmental organisations is a partnership which aims at disseminating knowledge, building skills, and fostering networks among the development community in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

In his opening speech, Moroccan Crown Prince Sidi Mohammed stressed the need for the mobilisation and participation of the greatest number of people if the countries of the region are to succeed in the building of a modern state. He said although the

MENA region has scored "undeniable economic gains" in the last two decades, most of the countries continue to cope with major disparities.

"Our development will remain vulnerable for as long as our growth is not equitably and widely shared," the prince said.

World Bank Vice President Kamal Dervis urged developing countries to promote private-public interaction in order to deal with world economic blocs, attain economic stability and maximise the benefits of globalisation. Dervis stressed the importance of the role the media can play in articulating

Dull trading likely to continue at AFM during this week

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Amman Financial Market (AFM) general price index lost 5.58 points last week as share prices of most companies fell, brokers said Friday.

The brokers said "weak" half-year results of most companies discouraged investors from entering the market.

Amer Muasher, a broker, said the fall in the share prices of Arab Bank and Arab Potash Company (APC) was mainly responsible for the decrease in the general price index in the previous week.

"The two firms make up 50 per cent of the AFM.

Any change in their prices will affect the price index and the turnover," Mouasher told the Jordan Times.

The AFM's weekly bulletin indicated that general price index closed at 177.18 points down from 182.76 points a week before, or a 3.05 per cent decline.

The industrial sector's price index dropped by 3.80 points, or 4.43 per cent, while that of the insurance sector went down by 8.47 points, or 2.82 per cent.

The bulletin showed that turnover fell by 11.5 per cent to JD5.2 million down from JD5.9 million in the previous week. The

REUTERS • The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	MLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7335	0.8988	1.4232	134.10	1.5295	1713.20	1.9580	5.8125	
DE Mark	0.5769	-	0.3449	0.8204	77.41	0.8818	987.38	1.1288	3.3805
GB Sterling	1.6707	2.9004	-	2.3735	224.85	2.5653	2864.14	3.2731	9.7185
CH Franc	0.7026	1.2181	0.4189	-	94.35	1.0741	1202.95	137.47	4.0818
JP Yen	0.0075	1.2827	0.4460	1.0608	-	1.1401	12.76	145.84	4.3328
CA Dollar	0.6538	1.2916	0.4225	1.0366	1.14	-	1270.80	1.4581	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0128	0.3484	0.0831	1278.45	0.8931	-	11.42	3.3940
NL Guilder	0.0107	0.8839	0.3057	72.74	68.49	0.7816	874.96	-	2.9701
FR Franc	0.1720	0.2982	0.1029	24.4831	23.05	0.2631	33.65	33.6500	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7500	0.3770	3.6400	0.2643	0.1691	0.3770	34.7731
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2891	0.5317	5.1240	0.4282	0.1777	2139.83	4.8202
Saudi Riyal	0.2667	0.1891	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0811	0.98	404.63	0.9113
Bahrain Dinar	2.66	1.8807	9.9472	-	9.96	0.8072	9.74	4023.98	0.9682
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0302	1.0302	-	0.0836	1.01	416.76	0.9389
Kuwait Dinar	3.2862	2.3299	12.3234	1.2389	11.96	-	12.06	4885.21	0.9389
Emirate Dinar	0.2724	0.1931	1.0215	1.0127	0.9816	0.0829	-	412.24	0.9389
Lebanese/1000	0.85	0.4674	2.4720	0.2485	2.3995	0.2006	2.4199	-	2.2628
Egyptian	0.2926	0.2075	1.0973	0.1103	1.0691	0.0890	1.0742	443.89	-

Energy									
Oil	Last	Previous							
Brent	0.00	0.00							
W. Texas	14.64	14.67							
Bonny	0.00	0.00							
Dubai	12.37	11.95							
UL Gas	131.00	131.00							

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz's)	285	285.5							
Silver (oz's)	4.98	5.01							
Platinum (oz's)	365	367							
Al. (3 Months)	1413	1414							
Cu (3 Months)	1672	1673							
Zinc (3 Months)	1081	1082							
Lead (3 Months)	541	542							
Ni (3 Months)	4350	4355							

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls		
New York	DOW JONES	7677.07	-4.15	-0.07	7760.75	7627.89	7682.22		
New York	S&P 500	978.84	-3.82	-0.37	991.41	974.65	982.26		
London	FT-SE 100	5123.3	14.8	0.29	5194.9	5113.5	5118.7		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	14042.91	-218.33	-1.53	14185.3	14042.9	14281.2		
Paris	CAC 40	3690.75	44.29	1.21	3726.1	3647.59	3648.46		
Frankfurt	DAX	4820.25	8.07	0.17	4945.47	4765.33	4812.18		

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery							
Coffee (cibis)	113.42	Spot							
Cocoa (\$/ton)	2010	Spot							
Sugar (\$/ton)	234	Spot							
Wheat (\$/ton)	100	Spot							
Soy (\$/cibis)	24.4	Spot							
Tea (\$/kg)	125	Spot							
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot							
Rice (\$/ton)	415	Spot							

* JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1821	1.188
DE Mark	0.4057	0.4077
CH Franc	0.4919	0.4944
FR Franc	0.121	0.1218
JP Yen	0.516	0.5168
NL Guilder	0.3894	0.3912
IT Lira	0.4107	0.4125

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Citibank expects losses of \$200 million in Russia

NEW YORK (AFP) — U.S.-owned Citibank has said it expected losses from operations in Russia to reduce its after-tax earnings by about \$200 million in the third quarter.

Citibank's headquarters Citicorp attributed the losses to volatility in the markets but said the

planned merger with Travelers Group "remains on track."

Travelers owns the stock brokerage Salomon Smith Barney which has reported losses of about \$150 million.

Citicorp and Travelers were due to form the largest provider of financial services in the world.

BritishBank courses at Radisson SAS for Middle Management

BRITISHBANK held a two-week intensive course at the Radisson SAS Hotel. The course was designed specifically for BritishBank middle management. The course focused on three main aspects of management role effectiveness, communication skills and influencing skills.

The role effectiveness course embraced all objectives concerning the ability of participants to be more proactive and creative in their role, to encourage participants to increase their influence, use their empowerment and to develop participants' interpersonal skills. Moreover, the communication skills course covered several objectives of which to raise individuals' awareness of their current communication expertise, practice and develop effective verbal communication skills. As for the influencing skills course main objectives was to practice and develop an effective range of influencing skills and identify current effective use and overuse of various influencing styles.

BritishBank has been a principal member of the HSBC Group since 1959. Headquartered in London with 130,000 staff in more than 5,500 offices in 81 countries and assets of over GBP286 billion (as at 31 December 1997), HSBC Group is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations. Among the other principal members of the Group are Hong Kong Bank in Asia, Midland Bank in Europe and Marine Midland Bank in the United States of America.

Inmarsat director general opens Dubai regional centre

Inmarsat, the world's only provider of global mobile satellite communications, officially opened its Dubai Regional Centre today.

Inmarsat's Director General, Warren Grace, met with Mr. Abdullah Ahmad Lootah, under-Secretary of the UAE Ministry of Communications and Mr. Ali Salem Al-Owais, General Manager, Emirates Telecommunications Corporation (Etisalat) in Abu Dhabi before opening the Regional Centre in Dubai. In February this year, Mr. Abdullah Ahmad Lootah signed an agreement with George Symeonidis, Inmarsat's Executive Vice President of Corporate Affairs and Strategy to establish an Inmarsat Regional Centre in Dubai.

The centre is headed by Dr. Mohammad El Amin, Inmarsat's regional director for the Middle East and North Africa. He will lead a small team of technical and business development professionals to develop mobile satellite communication services through the region.

Inmarsat has previously established resident offices in Beijing, China and project offices in Delhi, India and Lagos, Nigeria.

About Inmarsat

Inmarsat is an internationally owned cooperative that provides mobile satellite communications worldwide. Established in 1979 to serve the maritime community, Inmarsat has since evolved to become the only provider of global mobile satellite communications for distress and safety requirements and commercial applications at sea, in the air, and on land.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Donnybrook
- Chair piece
- Daffy
- Money in Sri Lanka
- Apple discard
- Pressing device
- Plus feature
- Some time hence
- Composer Porter
- Meat-and-potatoes dish
- Actor Mineo
- Trompe-l'oeil
- Deluxe
- "Pygmalion" writer's initials
- Birdbrain
- That's enough!
- Stanley Gardner
- Bars in Belgrade
- "Who did it?" reply
- Pasta-in-sour-cream dish
- Flamboyant
- Carry
- Loyal
- Cream-filled dessert
- Wound reminder
- Flank steak
- Stood up
- Common spare to convert
- Human parasites
- Gold in Guadalajara
- Row's opp.
- Crosby
- Sailing
- Island, NY
- Celebes ox
- Faels regret
- Scout group
- Sailing vessel
- Quick and skilful
- Self-perception

DOWN

- Bikini tops
- Chicken the pace
- Church recess
- Evidences sadness
- Deadly
- Wound reminder
- Flank steak
- Stood up
- Common spare to convert
- Human parasites
- Gold in Guadalajara
- Row's opp.
- Crosby
- Sailing
- Island, NY
- Celebes ox
- Faels regret
- Scout group
- Sailing vessel
- Quick and skilful
- Self-perception

By Louise G. White
St. Petersburg, FL

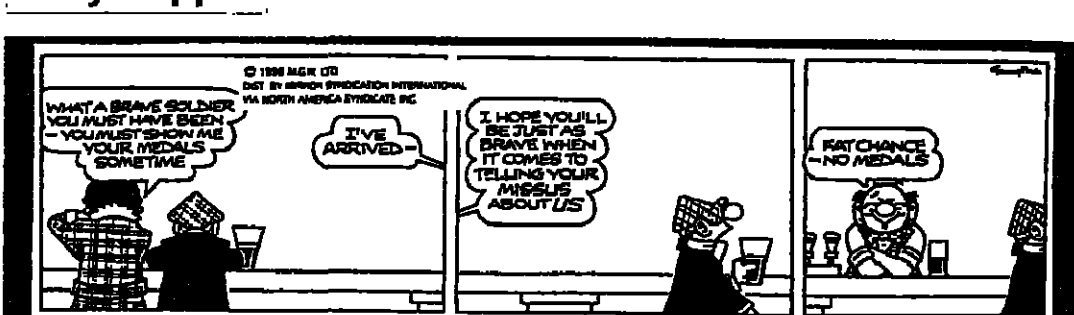
SHOW TEAMS WASH
TYRO EASES OSLIO
EDAM AGGRA NEON
MELANGHOLYSTATE
NEH TEEN
SER DEW ROUBST
GRAM ROOK OATER
ROYALSKYANDNTLE
ADORE ELLE ELLA
MENTAL EION EST
RICHPTA
PARTNERORRTHM
ROAR GULE GRILE
ONTO ESEN REDS
DEED SETAE SEES

36 Icelandic saga
41 Rectifying
42 Honeydew, e.g.
47 Look at
49 Votes in
53 General
56 The same, on the Seine
57 Right on maps
58 Aware of
59 Corp. honchos
60 Classification
61 Howl
62 Actress Belin
63 At this time

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF.



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RODAH

GUDOH

KLEESH

CULIES

Ans: THE

Yesterday's Jumbles: ASSAY TANGY INBORN GIGGLE
Answer: Where the fans of a losing team often end up — IN TIERS

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Volume of goods imported through Aqaba rises by 33 per cent during first half of '98

DESPITE A three per cent drop in the number of vessels and cruise ships that docked at Aqaba port during the first half of this year, the volume of imported goods handled at the port grew by about 33 per cent, the executive director of the Marine Shipping Society told Al Ra'i Arabic daily.

He revealed that 731 vessels arrived at the port of Aqaba during the January-June 1998 period compared to 752 vessels during the same period of last year. Imports totalled 2.8 million tonnes (2.1 million in 1997). Executive Director Sufian Mheisen said. He indicated that the volume of exports through Aqaba, including reexports in goods in transit, was around 3.3 million tonnes during the first half of this year compared to 3.5 million tonnes during the first half of 1997.

Mheisen pointed out that exports of phosphate, potash and cement dropped by between 12 and 40 per cent whereas exports of fertilisers increased by around 74 per cent. He explained that 80 vessels loaded 1,727,000 tonnes of phosphate, 45 vessels transported 550,000 tonnes of potash and 140,000 tonnes of cement were shipped by eight vessels. About 400,000 tonnes of various types of fertilisers were exported by 28 ships. In addition, around 70,000 tonnes of raw table salt were exported for the first time, the amount was transported on five vessels.

The activity of cruise ships during the first half of this year was sharply down as only 31 ships carrying 9,840 tourists arrived at the port compared to 68 cruise ships that brought 11,270 tourists during the first half of last year (Al Ra'i).

Member of Lower House says army should be participating in farming projects

BEFORE TALKING about spending priorities, the state should limit its internal and external spending and minimise unnecessary expenditure, Lower House of Parliament member Khaled Tarawneh said when asked to specify which areas he sees most in need for financing. He continued to say that the priorities should be in the following three fields: Fighting poverty and unemployment, shifting towards the Arab dimension in development and meeting the vital interests of the public.

Noting that Jordan is an agricultural country and that attention should be given to the farming sector, Tarawneh said the army should be involved in a national development programme whereby farmlands are to be distributed to army units to plant them and maintain them to arrive at greening Jordan by the year 2000 (Al Aswaq).

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) It looks like the confusion has increased, and somebody near you is about ready to freak out. You're not usually very good at consulting other people, but today you might give it a try. This person may simply have bitten off a little more than he or she can chew. The same thing could happen to you, so be compassionate.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is a great weekend for playing with friends. There are going to be all sorts of interesting things to do, some of them spiritually uplifting. You and your friends could get involved in a project that helps others. It looks like there's work that needs doing. Go ahead and volunteer. It'll be fun.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Someone is authority has a list of things for you to do, and it would be nice if you could figure them out yourself. It's a test, you see. There's also somebody closer to home with hopes and dreams that involve you. You can't please everyone today, but you can give it a try. Remember to take care of yourself, too.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) You may not be able to visit a distant friend this weekend, but he or she might be able to come to you. That's better anyway, since you have chores close to home. It'll be hard to get out of them, but there will be time to play. If all else fails, meet at a neutral spot close to your neighbourhood.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You could make a great deal today, a bargain you never expected. You could even stumble on it at a garage sale — a treasure, perhaps only to you, but a treasure nonetheless. One note of caution. Your sweetheart may not be as keen on this idea as you are. Plan to do something special with him or her later on.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There's some obligation you need to get clear of now, maybe a visit you promised to make to a friend or relative. Whatever it is, it's something that's been nagging you for quite some time, and this is your perfect weekend to do it. Don't put it off any longer.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You may tend to drift off today. Remember how you used to set out to clean your room, but got involved with reading the comic books and nothing else got done? That's the sort of situation you'll be running into today, so take care. Set priorities, and make sure the most important stuff gets done.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) It'll be easy to get what you want today. You already know what you want to accomplish. Right now, however, you're at a fork in the road; there are two different ways you could go, either of which would be fun. You might even want to let somebody else decide!

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Somebody wants you to stay home and fix things up around the house. Somebody else wants you to come over and listen to him or her complain about life. What you really need is a friend you can go off and play tennis with. Some sort of one-on-one activity like that would tune you right up.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 30) This is going to be a good weekend to study. You'll learn quickly and easily. It also looks like you want to travel. How can you do both? Well, study something which you're travelling, or travel to a class, or visit a museum. What you learn will be very useful later. Keep that in mind while you're picking your destination.

AQUARIUS: (January 31 to February 19) It's a good time to go shopping, but make lists first. Call ahead to find out if the stores have what you want. You could save yourself a lot of time that way, and time appears to be synonymous with money. Do the research before you fall into the clutches of the salespeople.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) The moon's in your sign this weekend, which is wonderful. And there's a lunar eclipse tomorrow, which is even more thrilling. During this phase, you're learning about partnerships. It might seem at first like you're learning how to draw away from the other person, but that's only temporary. You'll see. This day has a happy ending.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Dull trading likely to continue at AFM

(Continued from page 8)

average daily turnover amounted to JD1.05 million in the past week compared to JD1.18 million a week earlier.

The total number of shares traded was 3.6 million.

Muasher said the share price of the Arab Bank, the market's mainstay, closed at JD221.500 compared to an opening price of JD228.500 at the beginning of the week.

He indicated that the APC share price, which fell by the daily limit of five per cent to JD4.280, was still reacting to a slump in the value of the APC's Global

Depository Receipts (GDRs) on international markets.

Naim Nageeb, another broker, said the stock market's share prices recorded an "unprecedented low level, especially those of the industrial sector."

"The decline in the share prices is a reflection of the investors' disappointment over the weak half-year results these companies registered," Nageeb said.

"The near absence of foreign investors and lack of institutional buying also played another role in deepening the stock market's recession," he added.

The two brokers predicted

that recession in the market will continue this week unless major developments, seen mostly unlikely, take place.

The AFM bulletin showed that the banking sector won 51.8 per cent of the turnover, or JD2.7 million, followed by the industrial sector which recorded 35 per cent, or JD1.8 million. The services sector took 12.2 per cent, JD640,000, and finally insurance sector trailed with one per cent, or JD50,000.

The Arab Bank ranked first among the firms that won the attention of the investors with a turnover amounting to JD1.5 million. The Philadelphia Invest-

ment Bank ranked second with a turnover amounting to JD596,076. The bank's shares rose from 600 fils to 680 fils.

The Housing Bank's turnover amounted to JD333,348 but the share price dropped to JD3.08 in the past week from JD3.17 a week earlier.

Trading in the industrial sector focused on APC which won JD464,772 of the turnover followed by the Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company with a turnover amounting to JD246,666, the bulletin's figure indicated.

The stock market figures showed that the organised

market's share of the total turnover amounted to JD4.5 million while the parallel market recorded JD1.3 million.

Shares of the National Poultry, Union Investment and Al Sharq Investment Company dominated the parallel market with a turnover amounting to JD260,200, 194,203 and 146,793 respectively.

The bulletin showed that out of the 102 firms that changed hands in the stock market, 15 firms recorded increase in their share prices, 57 companies recorded decrease and 21 firms remained unchanged.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN

TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179

ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (29/08/1998 - 02/09/1998)

WEEKLY REPORT

DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS		COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES EXERCISED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE MARKET PRICE	TURNOVER SHARES	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
HIGH	LOW														
227.000	220.000	ARAB BANK	18.1	.90	211	7010	1566940	228.50	231.00	220.00	221.50	-7.00	223.529	.080	5
1.680	1.650	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.5	4.22	25	51947	86524	1.66	1.67	1.66	1.66	-	1.666	.124	5
1.160	1.130	BANK OF JORDAN	-	0.00	24	18738	20465	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.08	-.04	1.092	.089	4
1.020	.950	KID. EAST INV. BK.	65.7	0.00	5	6900	6838	1.00	1.00	.96	1.00	-	.991	.049	2
1.590	1.560	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.1	6.56	12	5107	8102	1.58	1.59	1.58	1.58	-	1.586	.021	4
3.200	3.040	THE HOUSING BK.	19.5	3.25	94	107203	23348	3.17	3.17	3.08	3.08	-.09	3.110	.107	5
1.850	1.820	JOR. KUNALIT BANK	.8	0.00	16	5436	9738	1.82	1.81	1.78	1.80	-.02	1.791	.036	4
.630	.580	JOR. GULF BANK	-	0.00	3	12050	7101	.60	.59	.58	.58	-.02	.589	.040	2
2.130	2.130	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	41.1	2.48	1	200	404	2.13	2.02	2.02	2.02	-.11	2.020	.001	1
1.780	1.720	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.8	0.00	7	35800	35800	1.74	1.76	1.73	1.74	-	1.744	.163	5
1.580	1.530	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	22.9	3.36	7	1798	2707	1.52	1.49	1.49	1.49	-.05	1.506	.009	2
.820	.760	BETT. AL-MAL (BETHNA)	3.7	0.00	3	1150	871	.78	.77	.75	.75	-.03	.759	.058	2
.850	.600	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	1045.0	0.00	339	894371	596076	.60	.71	.60	.68	-.08	.665	8.964	5
BANKS SECTOR															
776 1169740 2701618 INDEX NUMBER : 292.63 CHANGE 1 - 2.82*															
3.000	2.950	JORDAN INSURANCE	12.9	5.00	2	2346	7038	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	-	3.000	.047	1
2.200	2.200	UNITED INSURANCE	39.9	0.00	2	2286	5029	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20	-	2.200	.114	1
.930	.890	ARABIAN SEAS INSUR.	48.3	0.00	3	4179	3678	.93	.88	.88	.88	-.05	.880	.209	2
2.160	2.160	GENERAL ARAB INSUR.	23.4	3.74	2	535	1145	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	-	2.140	.027	1
1.450	1.380	JERUSALEM INSUR.	9.4	5.80	2	300	415	1.38	1.40	1.38	1.38	-	1.383	.011	2
2.820	2.640	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.6	9.16	6	1665	4522	2.69	2.74	2.69	2.73	-.04	2.716	.076	2
1.120	1.100	HOLY LAND INSUR.	8.4	0.00	2	650	728	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	-	1.120	.032	2
2.150	2.150	PHILADELPHIA INSUR.	17.3	0.00	1	5000	10750	2.15	2.15	2.15	2.15	-	2.150	.250	1
1.940	1.900	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	9.3	0.00	2	4000	7760	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	-	1.940	.152	2
1.500	1.420	JORDAN GULF INSUR.	-	0.00	2	232	343	1.50	1.48	1.48	1.48	-.02	1.478	.010	1
1.070	1.070	ARAB UNIV. LIFE INSUR.	10.7	3.74	2	4374	4680	1.07	1.07	1.07	1.07	-	1.070	.219	1
1.650	1.650	BAT. AL-MALIA INSUR.	29.4	0.00	1	800	1320	1.65	1.65	1.65	1.65	-	1.650	.040	1
3.490	3.490	ALHISAR AL-ARABI	51.5	1.43	2	624	2178	3.49	3.49	3.49	3.49	-	3.490	.031	1
INSURANCE SECTOR															
29 26991 49586 INDEX NUMBER : 127.37 CHANGE 1 - 0.12*															
1.550	1.520	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.7	5.50	68	87944	132218	1.53	1.53	1.50	1.50	-.03	1.503	.440	5
2.700	2.360	IBRID ELECTRICITY	13.8	4.46	2	200	460	2.45	2.36	2.24	2.24	-.21	2.300	.007	2
.920	.830	KATL. PORTFOLIO	31.1	0.00	33	12800	10423	.85	.84	.78	.78	-.07	.814	.254	3
.770	.770	REAL ESTATE INV.	14.3	0.00	7	1090	763	.72	.73	.68	.73	+.01	.700	.023	4
.330	.320	JORDAN TEL. TRAD.	-	0.00	1	600	36	.32	.30	.30	.30	-	.300	.003	1
6.000	6.000	AD-DUSTOUR	22.1	3.98	1	200	1140	6.00	5.70	5.70	5.70	-.30	5.700	.011	1
1.110	1.100	KID. EAST HOTELS	212.8	0.00	22	108723	121013	1.11	1.12	1.10	1.11	-	1.113	.177	4
2.020	1.660	ARAB LIFE INV. ENDC.	9.8	2.02	22	13800	27634	2.00	2.01	1.98	1.98	-.02	2.002	.068	5
.940	.890	KARMA EDUCATION	20.8	0.00	6	2800	2512	.89	.90	.89	.90	+.01	.897	.047	4
1.250	1.070	UNIFIED CO.	4.9	10.00	59	22450	24926	1.07	1.16	1.06	1.10	+.03	1.110	.449	5
1.170	1.080	UNITED FOR FINAN. INV.	3.4	5.90	3	1100	1204	1.15	1.10	1.09	1.09	-.06	1.095	.055	1
SERVICES SECTOR															
275 251241 322386 INDEX NUMBER : 109.51 CHANGE 1 - 0.60*															
1.100	1.100	ATTAJEDID	-	0.00	2	688	757	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	-	1.100	.025	1
2.020	1.900	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.5	5.67	40	80367	157164	1.90	1.97	1.93	1.94	-.04	1.956	.133	5
1.700	1.600	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINS	16.9	0.00	6	12550	2000	1.60	1.60	1.60	1.60	-	1.600	.092	2
4.950	4.530	ARAB POTASH CO.	21.1	4.67	18	103900	464772	4.65	4.60	4.28	4.28	-.37	4.473	.125	5
10.750	10.600	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	8.42	38	5142	54515	10.63	10.75	10.55	10.56	-.07	10.602	.080	5
5.100	4.600	JORDAN TANNING	8.2	7.84	1	100	510	5.10	5.10	5.10	5.10	-	5.100	.010	1
1.100	1.050	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	11.7	6.80	1	100	105	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.05	-	1.050	.007	1
1.210	1.060	INDUSTRIAL COMM. AGR.	67.9	0.00	16	7209	8464	1.19	1.18	1.15	1.15	-.04	1.174	.144	5
2.880	2.620	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	7.3	2.83	162	91813	246666	2.73	2.77	2.65	2.65	-.08	2.687	.210	5
1.770	1.130	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	4.8	9.09	15	54250	60136	1.16	1.18	1.10	1.10	-.06	1.108	1.085	3
2.750	2.650	JORDAN DAIRY	6.1	10.10	5	2317	6190	2.65	2.75	2.65	2.75	+.10	2.672	.132	2
1.110	1.100	JOR. PIPES MANUFACT.	9.2	9.01	8	4450	4923	1.11	1.11	1.10	1.11	-	1.106	.137	4
.400	.320	INTERMED. PETRO. CREM.	-	0.00	12	12250	3802	.32	.32	.30	.30	-.02	.310	.306	5
.810	.760	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	8.2	10.00	10	1500	1207	.80	.81	.80	.80	-	.805	.100	5
2.850	2.850	ALADDOH CO.	21.6	3.11	2	200	528	2.85	2.71	2.57	2.57	-.28	2.640	.013	2
.820	.710	KATL. CABLE WIRE. NYAC	33.3	0.00	20	24400	17148	.72	.73	.70	.71	-.01	.703	.325	4
.500	.390	JOR. SULPHUR ORE	7.4	0.00	19	16175	6354	.40	.40	.38	.39	-.01	.393	.359	4
.460	.450	KAWHER INVEST.	-	0.00	19	8300	4091	.52	.53	.47	.50	.02	.493	.415	4
.760	.610	UNIV. NOON. TRNS.	8.4	11.11	95	60400	36375	.61	.60	.54	.54	-.07	.569	1.807	5
.550	.510	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	-	0.00	8	4444	3377	.52	.52	.50	.52	-	.524	.081	3
1.250	1.220	KATL. CHLORINE	8.8	8.00	22	20233	25301	1.22	1.24	1.23	1.25	.02	1.250	.291	4
.720	.620	JOR. HWY. CARBIDE CO.	8.6	16.39	31	34048	20805	.62	.63	.60	.61	-.01	.611	.426	5
.990	.820	EL - KAY READY WEAR	42.2	0.00	31	38364	45944	1.18	1.20	1.17	1.20	+.02	1.198	.512	5
.720	.620	INTL. TOBACCO	6.5	6.27	15	17370	16165	.93	.94	.92	.93	-	.931	.145	5
.890	.860	UNION CR. & VBO.	9.6	0.00	7	5655	4949	.88	.88	.87	.87	-.01	.875	.114	3
.860	.820	JORDAN STEEL	8.8	8.86	23	25335	20655	.83	.83	.79	.79	-.04	.815	.169	5
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U.S. Open Champs breeze but Sampras, Agassi struggle

NEW YORK (AFP) — Defending champions Martina Hingis and Pat Rafter won with ease. World number one Pete Sampras struggled a little. Andre Agassi and 1997 runner-up Greg Rusedski struggled a lot.

But all advanced to the third round of the U.S. Open with victories here Thursday, continuing an adherence to form that has seen only one major seed — Australian Open champion Petr Korda — bounced from the event.

Four-time U.S. Open winner Sampras moved one step closer to matching Roy Emerson's career record 12 Grand Slam singles titles by ousting American compatriot Paul Goldstein 7-6 (7/4), 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Sampras served 23 aces to win in two hours and eight minutes in a match postponed from Wednesday by rain and played in the second stadium, the first outer-court match for Sampras here since 1992.



Top seed Pete Sampras of the U.S. wipes his head during a break against Paul Goldstein of the U.S. during second round play at the USTA National Tennis Centre Thursday. The match had been scheduled for September 2 but was delayed due to rain. Sampras won 7-6 (7/4) 2-6 6-3 6-3 (Reuters photo)

"It wasn't a great day for me," Sampras said. "It was one of those days you find

a way to win. I was struggling a little bit. I wasn't really at my best."

Swiss World No. 1 Hingis dispatched 21st-ranked Iva Majoli 7-6 (7/4), 6-0, in a rematch of a 1997 French Open final won by the Croatian to deny Hingis a Grand Slam sweep.

Hingis has won five titles this year, including the Australian Open, but none since the Italian Open in early May. She overcame early jitters to win another rain-out match.

"I was nervous in the beginning," Hingis said. "I was up 4-1 but I didn't feel in control of the match. I felt nervous the first set. It was strange."

Australia's Rafter, showing few ill effects from a five-set opening victory over Morocco's Hicham Arazi, trounced 104th-ranked Argentinian Hernan Gumbi 6-4, 6-1, 6-2.

"It was tough. Today I found it tough to get up," Rafter said.

"It was important to get off to a good start. If I got down I would have been very hard on myself. You feel a little mentally drained."

Britain's Rusedski rallied past Czech Bohdan Ulihrach 4-6, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2, 7-5, his second five-set triumph in a row. He saved one match point after having rescued two earlier against South Africa's Wayne Ferreira.

"I want to make sure I give you an exciting match," Rusedski joked, saying he had no endurance fear with Dutchman Jan Siemerink up next.

"It doesn't bother me. I just have to keep going and playing better," Rusedski said. "It's just a matter of

playing big points better. I had to be mentally focused. You need a little bit of luck sometimes as well."

Eighth seed Agassi outlasted France's 45th-ranked Guillaume Raoux 6-3, 6-2, 6-7 (6/8), 3-6, 6-1. The American stayed on course for a possible quarter-final meeting with Sampras despite squandering the fourth set due to his anger over his mistakes in the tie-breaker.

"It was certainly a wake-up call for me to be up two sets, not close it out and be in a three-hour battle," Agassi said. "It's only going to help me. I don't mind. It wasn't a tremendously fatiguing match."

Agassi was thinking back to the Australian Open, where he squandered a two-set lead, losing a fourth-round match to Spain's Alberto Berasategui.

"Don't think that wasn't going through my mind," Agassi said. "I was frustrated at myself in the fourth for not executing in the tie-breaker. The fourth set was careless tennis. You have to move on and forget about it or you're going to be in the fifth. I had to turn it around."

Wimbledon finalist Goran Ivanisevic, whose 91-39 Grand Slam record makes him the winningest Slam player to never win a Slam title, advanced by beating American Todd Martin 1-6, 7-6 (7/5), 7-5, 6-3.

The 14th-seeded Croatian next plays Dutchman Paul Haarhuis, whose 7-3 career record against Ivanisevic includes winning their past five matches in a row.

"Every time I see him I make problems for myself," Ivanisevic said. "But this is a Grand Slam and I won't let that happen."

Teen stars Anna Kournikova and Venus Williams advanced easily.

The Russian ousted Czech Radka Bobkova 6-3, 6-4, while Williams needed only 57 minutes to oust Luxembourg's 137th-ranked Anne Kremer 6-1, 6-3.

Second seed Lindsay Davenport ousted American compatriot Lori McNeil 6-1, 6-1 while fourth seed and French Open champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain beat Colombia's Fabiola Zuluaga 6-3, 6-2.

"I feel comfortable," Sanchez said. "When you win a Grand Slam, that gives you a lot of confidence. What's important is



Andre Agassi of the U.S. returns a backhand against Guillaume Raoux of France during their second round U.S. Open match Thursday. Agassi, a former champion, is the eighth seed (Reuters photo)

winning Grand Slams. That's what I'm looking for now. I don't have to prove anything."

Women's third-round play opens Friday with Hingis facing 31st-rated Amelie Mauresmo, who pushed the Swiss teen to three sets in a July Fed Cup match. "This is a different

time. This is a Grand Slam," Hingis said.

Five-time U.S. Open champion Steffi Graf continues her comeback from left knee surgery against Croatia's Mirjana Lucic, the 16-year-old who last month moved away from her father, saying he often beat her.

Ninth seed Irina Spirlea faces Serena Williams, who has won both their 1998 meetings. Spirlea bumped Serena's sister Venus here last year during a crossover in the semi-finals, prompting Venus' father Richard to dub the Romanian a "white turkey."



Seventh seeded Conchita Martinez of Spain prepares for a return to Jacqueline Trail of the U.S. Thursday in Flushing Meadows, New York (AFP photo)

Tennis becomes afterthought in U.S. Open

NEW YORK (AP) — The roar of jets passing over the U.S. Open took on an ominous tone Thursday. Players chasing Grand Slam glory struggled with a tragic crash that nearly claimed one of their own.

While top-seeded Pete Sampras and Martina Hingis reached the third round, tennis was mostly an afterthought as players reflected on the dangers they face while flying around the globe.

"That's certainly one of your biggest fears, to say good-bye to your loved ones and not return," said Andre Agassi, who also won a sec-

ond-round match. "When you travel the world like we do, you're bound to have your share of travel difficulties. But you pray to God you don't have to go through something like that."

Hingis moved one step closer to defending her title with a 7-6 (7/4), 6-0 victory over Iva Majoli a few hours after hearing about the crash of Swissair Flight 111 off the Canadian coast, killing all 229 people aboard.

Hingis, a national heroine in her homeland of Switzerland, said she knows many Swissair flight attend-

"It was terrible to hear it," Hingis said. "It's the airline I fly the most. When I heard I was like, 'No way, Swissair seems very safe.' It's terrible to know you don't have any chance up there."

Marc Rosset, the top Swiss male player, had been set to return to Geneva on Flight 111 Wednesday night after losing in the first round. Instead, he stayed an extra day to practice with players still in the tourney.

"It was a strange feeling when you know you just realize that for just changing your mind you are still alive," he said.

"I think I am a little afraid, when you realize you were close to dying," Sampras, seeking his fifth U.S. Open crown, had 23 aces while overcoming early sloppiness to reach the third round with a 7-6 (7/4), 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 win over Paul Goldstein.

Sampras had 43 unforced errors in the first two sets and double faulted on set point to lose the second set, but settled down in the final two sets. He will not face a seeded player before a possible encounter with Agassi in the quarterfinals.

Agassi, seeded eighth, struggled midway through his match before defeating Guillaume Raoux 6-3, 6-2, 6-7 (6/8), 3-6, 6-1, finishing the match with his 10th ace. The night match featured the talent and temper of the tempestuous Goran Ivanisevic, who had 20 aces and a 212 kph serve in a 1-6, 7-6 (7/5), 7-5, 6-3 victory over Todd Martin.

The 14th-seeded Ivanisevic muttered to himself in Croatian and banged his head on the court after missing points. But he also won a point with a spectacular shot between his legs with his back to the net.

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Twins, Indians and Blue Jays post victories

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Todd Walker doubled and scored on Terry Steinbach's single in the 12th inning Thursday, giving the Minnesota Twins a 5-4 win over the Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

A season-low crowd of 7,072 at the Metrodome saw the Twins rally twice late in the game. Minnesota made it 3-0 with a run in the ninth, and Matt Lawton's two-out homer in the 10th tied it at 4.

Eddie Guardado (3-1) retired all seven batters he faced. Rick White (1-5) was the loser.

Indians 2, Tigers 1

In Detroit, Dwight Gooden (7-6), with excellent defensive support, improved to 5-2 on the road. He went seven innings for the third time this year, giving up five hits and one walk with five strikeouts.

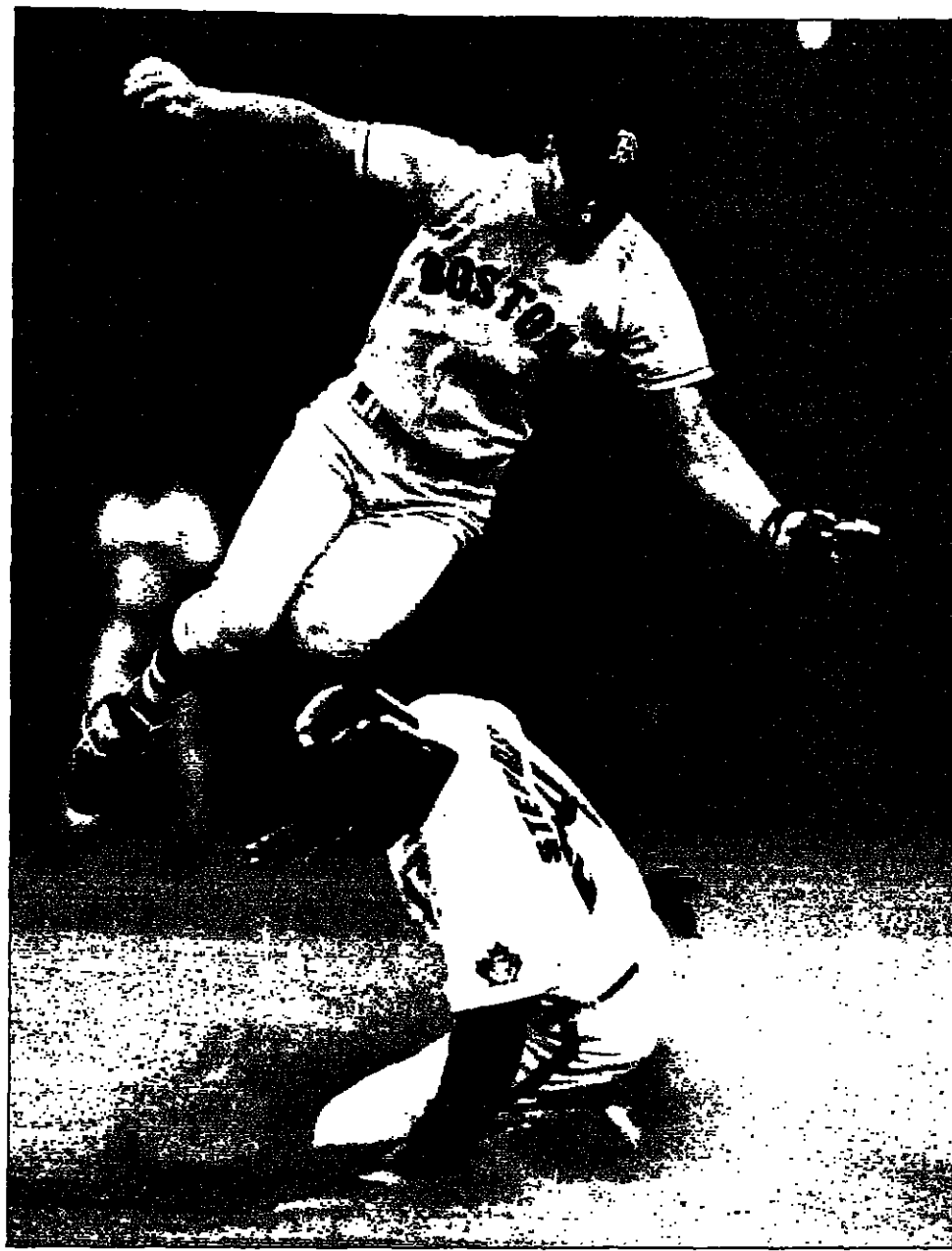
Sandy Alomar and Enrique Wilson, the last two batters in Cleveland's order, each singled off Justin Thompson (10-13) in the third and scored on Kenny Lofton's double into the left-field corner for a 2-0 lead.

Mike Jackson got the last two outs for his 35th save in 40 chances.

Blue Jays 4, Red Sox 3

In Toronto, Shannon Stewart drove in the winning run in the 11th with his fourth hit of the game as Toronto won its seventh straight.

In the opener of a four-game series, the Blue Jays managed to overcome Pedro Martinez and moved within a half-game of overtaking Texas for second place in the AL wild-card race.



Toronto Blue Jays Shannon Stewart slides safely under soaring Boston Red Sox second baseman Mike Benjamin during first inning American League action in Toronto, Thursday. Stewart led off the game with a single off Red Sox starter Pedro Martinez, but was left stranded on second base in the inning (Reuters photo)

place in the AL wild-card race. With a sweep, the Blue Jays would move within five games of the Red Sox, the wild-card leader.

Martinez gave up three runs and seven hits in seven innings, struck out 11 and walked three.

Robert Person (3-0) got out of a second-and-third jam in the 11th by striking out Darren Lewis and Chris Snopce. Dario Veras (0-1) was the loser.

Boxing team hopes to continue achievements at Pan-Arab Games

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Kingdom's golden gloves, who came in second in the 4th Arab Junior Boxing Championship recently concluded in Amman, have their eyes fixed on the next Pan-Arab Games in Amman.

The championship enabled officials to determine the Jordanian national boxing team who will represent Jordan in 1999 event.

"Our team did well in the Arab Championship and this is good proof that we are ready for the future tournaments," Jordan Boxing Federation (JBF) vice president Mohammad Suleiman told the Jordan Times.

Seven teams took part in the Amman Championship: Algeria, Tunisia, Syria, Palestine, Kuwait, Egypt

and Jordan.

Tunisia won first place and Jordan shared second overall second overall spot with Syria and Egypt with one gold, five silver and two bronze medals.

Jordan's Munther Oqeilan took the gold in the 51-kilogramme category.

With the competition now over, the JBF is seriously preparing for the Pan-Arab Games.

"We have put a plan which includes training camps in Russia, Turkey and Syria," Suleiman said.

"We will also be taking part in 18th Arab Championship in Tunisia in November, and the Asian Boxing Tournament in Thailand."

On the financial side, the Jordan Olympic Committee has approved the JBF's JD120,000 budget for the Pan-Arab Games.

JBF treasurer Omar Khamis said JD 3,500 was already handed over to the federation to cover the salaries of the referees and special diet programme for the players.

On the technical side, coach Maitham Amer pointed out that although the boxing team had a long record of success, the need for more financial support was urgent.

"The boxing team have always been a success in Jordan and outside the Kingdom," Amer told the Jordan Times.

"After the last Pan-Arab Games in Beirut where we won two gold and three bronze medals we are preparing ourselves for more," he added.

"To build a very strong team on the international level you need to put more effort and money," he pointed out.

Last year the Federation received JD8,000. This year they got JD12,000 as the yearly budget for the federation.

"You have to pay the referees, travel expenses, special diet programme and other expenses. That kind of money is not enough," the coach added.

Still the 4th Arab Championship is only a drop in the sea for Jordan's boxing team of Oqeilan, Wael Basheer and Fadi Hassan just to name a few who will compete in the next Pan-Arab Games together with champs Mohammad Abu Khadijeh and Ayman Nadi who raised high the Jordanian flag at the last Games in Beirut.

Second man files assault charge against Tyson

WASHINGTON (AP) — A second man who says he was assaulted by Mike Tyson following a minor traffic accident in a Maryland suburb filed a criminal assault charge Thursday against the former heavyweight boxing champion.

Abmielec Saucedo, 62, says Tyson punched him in the face "without warning" as Saucedo talked with another driver following the accident on Monday.

Saucedo's car struck a car driven by Richard Hardick, which then struck a Mercedes driven by Tyson's wife at a Gaithersburg, Maryland intersection on Monday.

Hardick, 50, filed a similar complaint against Tyson on Wednesday, saying Tyson kicked him in the groin following the accident.

"Each man corroborates the other's story in his complaint."

Tyson, 32, has denied the allegations. "I did not kick anyone. I did not punch anyone," Tyson said in a statement released Wednesday through his lawyer, John G. Branca.

"My wife and I were the victims of a traffic accident. I am distressed by

these false allegations. I did not touch anyone," he said.

His wife backed up his story, saying: "Mike did not punch, kick or touch anyone at any time."

"I was talking with the driver of the car in front of me when Mr. Tyson came at me," Saucedo said in his complaint.

"Without warning he punched me in the face with his fist."

"I saw stars, cut my upper lip and I was bleeding," Saucedo added.

Saucedo and Hardick described returning to their cars because of Tyson's agitated state, only to have men who had previously tried to restrain Tyson reach into their cars and remove their keys from the ignitions to keep them from leaving the scene.

The Tysons, however, did leave and were pulled over a short time later by police, who had received calls from witnesses.

A preliminary hearing on both charges has been set for Oct. 2. However Paul Kemp, the lawyer representing Tyson in both cases, says it's likely that hearing will be cancelled and a trial date set.

Tyson faces up to 10 years in prison and/or a \$2,500 fine on each assault charge.

"We're hopeful we can work out a prompt resolution of this thing," Kemp said.

In Indianapolis, Marion Superior Court Judge Patricia Gifford, who sentenced Tyson following his rape conviction, said Tuesday she expected probation officials would review the Maryland incident.

Tyson is due to be released from court supervision in March.

He spent three years in an Indiana prison for rape, and a lawsuit is pending in Montgomery County in which two women contend Tyson yelled slurs at them and flipped a table over in a Washington restaurant in March.

Last year, Tyson lost his license to box and was fined \$3 million after he bit Evander Holyfield's ears in a title bout.

He is scheduled to appear before the Nevada Athletic Commission Sept. 19 seeking a new license. Commission members have said they will want an explanation of the events surrounding Monday's accident.

Italy take no chances with Welsh water

CARDIFF (AFP) — Welsh water isn't good enough for Italy's superstar players — they've brought gallons of their own with them in preparation for Saturday's European Championship qualifier against Wales at Liverpool's Anfield ground.

Not only water, but all their own food and tons of pasta, and it has all been stored in two rooms at the team's hotel in north Wales.

The Serie A millionaires have also changed, yellow curtains in players' rooms because they couldn't sleep properly and checked every mini-bar in the 65 booked rooms — one for each player and backroom staff — to keep temptation away. They have also brought their own chef with them.

But it was the gallons of Italian mineral water that, along with the mountain of food that had to be transported to the hotel from the airport in a seven-ton lorry when the team arrived, that has amazed Welsh FA officials.

Said a source: "The Italians have brought enough water with them to have a lake of their own. They wanted it so that it could be used to boil their own pasta rather than use the local water."

And coach Dino Zoff hardly endeared himself to the media by refusing point blank to hold any press conference until Friday evening at Anfield — at the same time as the Wales-Italy Under-21 match was taking place in Wrexham.

The football talking point is whether veteran striker Roberto Baggio, now 31, will play up front alongside Lazio's new 19 million (£31 million) Christian Vieri, or whether Zoff will choose Juventus' 23-year-old ace Alessandro Del Piero.

The pair both played in a warm-up game against Fiorentina's youth side earlier this week, with the Italians winning 16-1 — Baggio scored two and made four before being

taken off at half time, while Del Piero scored once.

It is expected that Jonothan Bachini of Udinese and Michele Serena will make their full international debuts, while the Italians admit to being worried about Manchester United star Ryan Giggs.

An Italian FA official said: "He is Wales' one world-class player and obviously he is a concern to us, particularly after the goal he scored against Juventus in the Champions' League last season."

Giggs, who admits to having Baggio as one of his boyhood heroes, knows more than most of the

Welsh squad about the Italians after the European Cup clashes he has played against Juventus in recent years.

Giggs hopes for a repeat of United's victory over Juventus, and said: "When United played Juventus and beat them, we felt like we were flying because we had beaten the best team in Europe — it would be good to feel that way with Wales."

"The more you play them the more you appreciate them, particularly playing against people like Del Piero, because you see they are really classy players."

The Baggio v Del Piero debate is concerning all

Italy, but Giggs has his own solution. "I hope that Italy don't play either of them," he said. "When I was young, Baggio was one of my heroes, and I respect Del Piero's record in Europe, it is absolutely brilliant."

"This time it is a difficult match for us because Italy have such class players. But we feel we can win and we can give any team a tough time. I am quite confident we can face Italy with the right, positive attitude."

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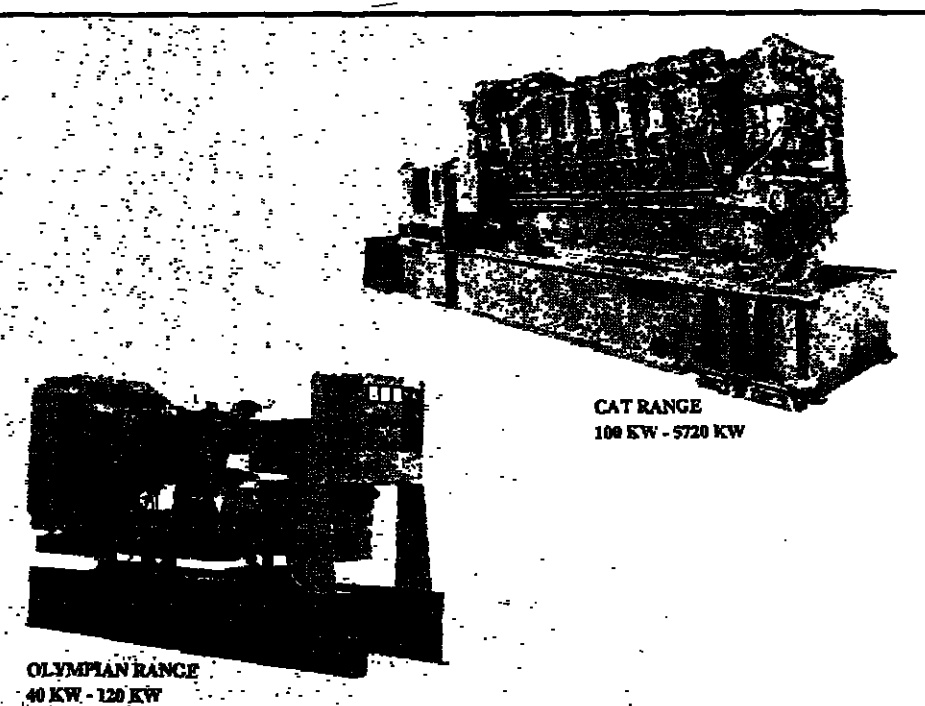
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Accusing them of supporting Kurdish rebels Turkey starts political offensive against Syria, Iran and Iraq

Agencies

TURKISH DEPUTY Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit accused Iran and Syria Friday of "open" support for the armed Kurdish rebels fighting against the central power of Ankara.

Ecevit accused Iran of giving refuge to fighters from the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) and allowing the rebels to use Iranian territory as a springboard for attacks against Turkey. He made the remarks during a visit by Iraq's Kurdish leader Massud Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), whom the vice-premier met in Ankara.

Turkey has long accused Syria of lending the rebel Kurds logistical support and of sheltering the movement's leader Abdullah Ocalan, either in Damascus or the Syrian-controlled Beqaa valley in Lebanon.

Syria denies the accusations. Tehran likewise denies Ankara's claims that it turns a blind eye to PKK infiltrations via the north of Iraq.

The accusations came shortly before a visit to Tehran by Turkey's Foreign Minister

Ismail Cem, scheduled for September 14-15. The PKK has been leading an armed rebellion against Ankara since 1984, aimed at creating an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Anatolia. An estimated 31,000 people have died in the conflict.

Turkey also warned Iraq on Friday to stay out of its fight with Kurdish rebels, saying it had gotten new evidence that Saddam Hussein was supporting the Kurdish guerrillas.

"We are receiving information that the Iraqi administration is supporting the PKK," Ecevit said, referring to the outlawed PKK. "This will hurt Iraq more than it hurts Turkey."

Turkey has been at war against the PKK since 1984. The PKK is fighting for autonomy for Kurds in Turkey's southeast.

The KDP has been involved in sporadic fighting with Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) since 1994 for control of the north of Iraq, which Baghdad lost control of after the Gulf War of 1991.

Fighting broke out between the two groups when their partnership collapsed due to rows over power-sharing and tax

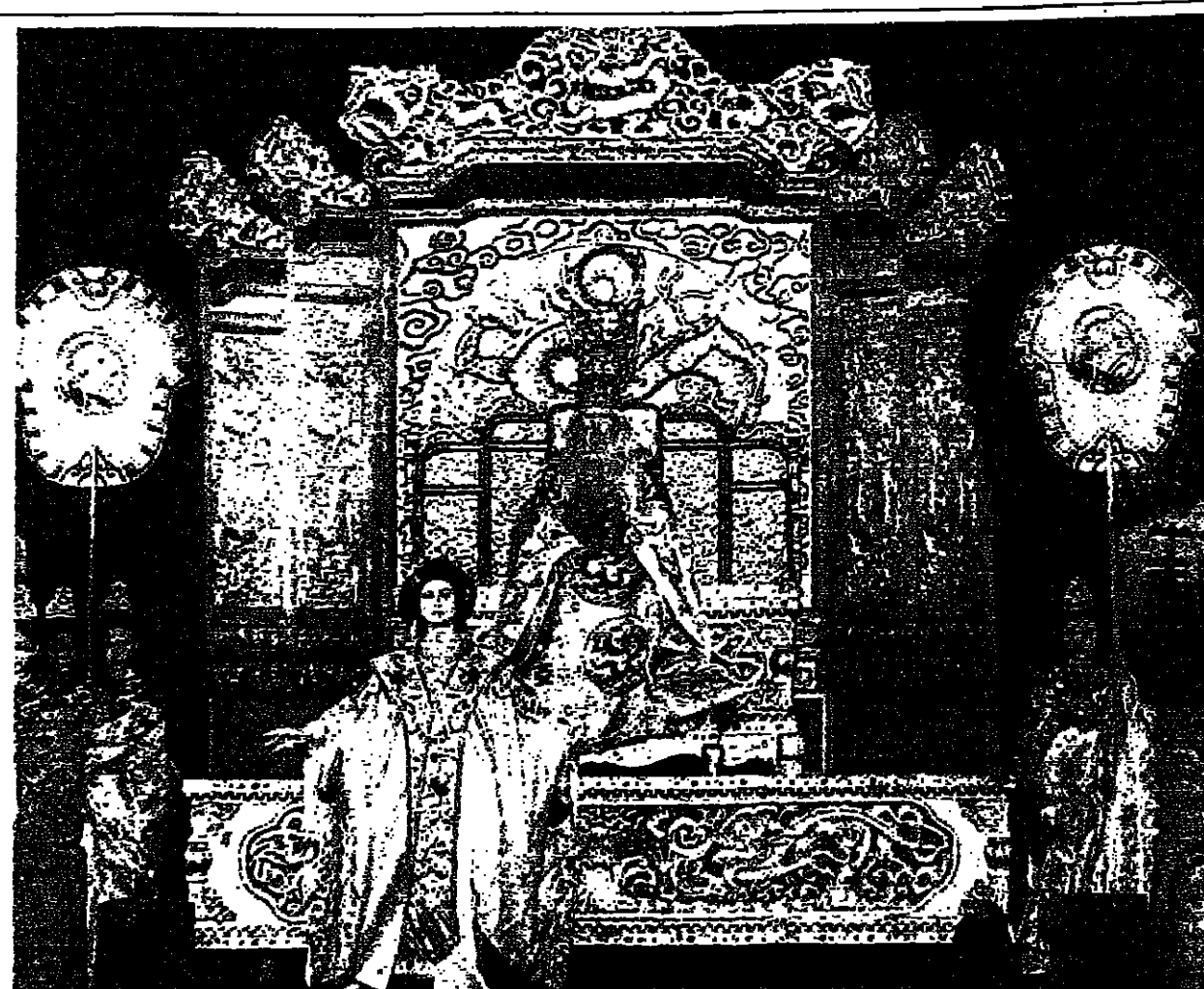
revenue. More than 3,000 people have been killed in intermittent fighting since then, although in a sign of improved relations, the KDP and the PUK have recently exchanged more than 200 prisoners.

Barzani is also due to come together with his rival Talabani for U.S.-sponsored peace talks later this month, his chief aide Sami Abderrahman said.

The KDP has also been fighting with Ankara's blessing to dislodge the rebel PKK from its rear bases in the north of Iraq since May 1997. A former PKK commander captured last May, Semdin Sakik, confirmed Thursday that Syria is the "headquarters" of the rebel Kurd movement against Ankara.

"I and other PKK leaders know that Syria does not want peace in Turkey," said Sakik during his trial in Diyarbakir in the southeast of the country.

Sakik was captured in the north of Iraq and taken to Turkey by Turkish troops after defecting from the PKK following disagreements with its leader Ocalan.



CHINESE OPERA: Princess Turnadot (center left) sings before her father, the emperor of China (sitting on his throne), during Giacomo Puccini's Turnadot on Thursday, a Chinese fairytale about the victory of love, being performed at the Imperial Ancestral Temple, located within the sacred walls of Beijing's Forbidden City. Turnadot, one of the biggest opera productions ever, is conducted by world renowned maestro Zubin Mehta and directed by celebrated Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou (AFP photo)

Swissair jet crash kills 229

PEGGY'S COVE (AP) — A Swissair pilot reported smoke in the cockpit, dumped tonnes of fuel and prepared for an emergency landing before his jetliner crashed into the ocean off Nova Scotia, killing all 229 people aboard.

Flight SR111 from New York to Geneva plunged into the Atlantic late Wednesday night about 90 minutes after leaving Kennedy International Airport at 8:18 p.m. (0018 GMT Thursday).

It carried 215 passengers — including two infants — and 14 crew.

Most of the passengers — 136 — were Americans, as was one crew.

By Thursday morning, 36 bodies had been found and searchers had located a chunk of the plane's fuselage believed to be intact under about 35 metres of

water. Heavy surf hampered search efforts.

"Time is not on our side," said Maj. Michel Brisebois of the rescue centre. Bodies were being taken to a temporary morgue at the Canadian Forces Base Shearwater, 50 kilometres to the east.

Chances of survival at this point are "very poor," Royal Canadian Mounted Police Staff Sgt. Keith McGuire said.

The McDonnell Douglas MD-11 reported problems at 10,000 metres, then descended to roughly 2,500 metres before disappearing from radar about 50 kilometres south of Halifax International Airport, said Philippe Bruggisser, chief executive officer of Swissair's parent group.

The crash occurred between seven and 10 minutes before the plane would have reached Halifax, he said at a news conference in Zurich.

The passengers had been prepared for an emergency landing.

Swissair officials said some bodies had been recovered wearing lifevests. Aside from the Americans, passengers included 30 French and 28 Swiss citizens; six British citizens; three Germans; three Italians, two Greeks.

One passenger each came from Saudi Arabia, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iran, Spain and Russia, and the Caribbean island of St. Kitts.

In New York, Swissair Vice President Walter Vollenweider said the list was based on passports and cautioned: "This is no indication about the residences of these people."

originally planned to land in Boston because Swissair has an infrastructure there, but then headed to Halifax because it was closer.

Swissair identified the pilot as Urs Zimmermann, 50, and co-pilot Stefan Loew, 36. Both were Swiss. Witnesses on the ground reported hearing sputtering noises from an aircraft passing overhead and then a thundering crash.

"The motors were still going, but it was the worst-sounding deep groan that I've ever heard," said witness Claudia Zinck-Gilroy. Dozens of fishing boats and coast guard ships immediately headed out in driving rain to the crash site, about ten kilometres off the coast of Peggy's Cove, a picturesque fishing village popular with tourists.

(Continued on page 3)

Beshara, released, vows to continue resistance

BEIRUT (AFP) — A Lebanese woman jailed 10 years ago in a notorious prison for attempting to kill the leader of an Israeli-backed militia was freed Thursday and immediately vowed to continue the fight against Israel.

"The resistance is a flaming torch that we will continue to carry until the liberation of our land," declared a defiant Suha Beshara, who has become a symbol of the Lebanese struggle against Israel's 20-year occupation.

The 31-year-old Beshara, who appeared pale but smiling at a press conference in Beirut, said she had no regrets over her 1988 attempt to murder Antoine Lahad, commander of the Israeli-allied South Lebanon Army (SLA).

"I will do it all over again, because I considered him a Jew and still do," she said. "What I did was not a crime, it was a Lebanese resistance action."

Beshara, a Christian and communist party member was freed — after 10 years without trial or charge in the SLA-run Khiam prison in Israeli-occupied south Lebanon — on Lahad's orders for "humanitarian reasons."

The Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation said her release was part of a deal giving Lahad political asylum in France.

But Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, while thanking France for its mediation, denied Beshara was released as part of a deal or under any SLA-imposed conditions that she

leaves Lebanon. "She has a visa to France if she wants to leave, but there are no conditions... nobody can force a Lebanese to leave his country," Hariri said.

Beshara also denied the reports. "I am free to go where ever I want, even in southern Lebanon, but my parents informed me that I already had a visa to France."

After her release, Beshara was handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross which escorted her out of the border enclave and later met Hariri in Beirut before going home to a euphoric welcome from her family.

Beshara was 21 when she was hired as a private tutor for Lahad's children with the mission of assassinating the

SLA commander, branded a traitor by the anti-Israeli resistance movement.

On Nov. 7, 1988, she opened fire on Lahad with a handgun at his home in Marjayoun, seriously wounding him in the jaw and the arm. Lahad was treated for several months in Israel and still suffers from partial paralysis in one arm. Beshara was the best-known prisoner at Khiam, where human rights groups, particularly London-based Amnesty International, have catalogued numerous cases of torture and ill-treatment.

"I came to Beirut, but I am still with my [fellow prisoners] and we hope to liberate them all," she said. When asked about torture,

(Continued on page 3)

Iraq to replace veteran U.N. envoy

CAIRO (AP) — Iraq's high-profile ambassador to the United Nations is leaving his post for a more senior job in Baghdad, officials said Thursday.

Nizar Hamdoun, one of President Saddam Hussein's most trusted aides, will likely leave at the end of the year after six years at the United Nations. Iraqi officials in Amman, told the Associated Press by telephone.

His job could go to the deputy foreign minister, Riyadh Al Qaisi, said the officials, speaking on condition of anonymity.

They declined to say what post Hamdoun could get.

Hamdoun's transfer is the latest in a recent reshuffle of diplomatic missions, the biggest that Saddam has ordered since the end of the 1991 Gulf war.

Some 30 ambassadors and other diplomats have been recalled since July to be replaced by prominent journalists and officials from the ruling Baath Party. Saddam reportedly hopes that the new officials will be able to improve Iraq's image that has been tarnished since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

However, Hamdoun's recall is not considered a demotion.

A former deputy foreign minister, Hamdoun was made ambassador in 1992 after the war, and has frequently led Iraq's negotiations with U.N. weapons inspectors who are entrusted with dismantling the country's weapons of mass destruction.

Fluent in English, Hamdoun was the first Iraqi ambassador to the United States after the two countries restored diplomatic relations in 1984 ending a nearly 20-year break.

'Israel had the bomb in '67'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel built its first nuclear bomb shortly after the 1967 six-day war, according to Israeli press reports on a book to be published soon in the United States.

In the book "Israel and the Bomb," researcher Avner Cohen said he pinpointed the moment Israel entered the nuclear weapons club by studying thousands of Israeli and U.S. government documents and interviewing hundreds of people involved in Israel's nuclear programme.

Israel has never acknowledged having an atomic arsenal but experts estimate the Jewish state has built between 100 and 200 nuclear weapons in a programme launched with French assistance in the 1950s.

Mark Heller of Tel Aviv's Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies said there is no general consensus on when Israel built its first bomb except that it is believed to have occurred before the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

"Most accounts of the 1973 war include references to concerns, particularly in the United States, that Israel may have been preparing to use nuclear weapons" after severe setbacks at the start of the war, Heller said.

He said U.S. President Richard Nixon's decision to airlift weapons to Israel during the war was widely seen as designed to avoid Israel using its nuclear bomb in desperation.

According to Cohen's book, it was also Nixon who convinced then-Prime Minister Golda Meir to maintain a policy of deliberate ambiguity about Israel's nuclear capability.

Israeli court rejects custody call for Jewish extremist

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli court Friday rejected a police request to hold a Jewish extremist in custody who was accused of anti-Palestinian violence in the divided West Bank city of Hebron.

The court rejected the police and prosecution argument that Noam Federman, a far-right militant and former member of the outlawed anti-Arab movement Kach, should be detained as a "deterrent" to other activists.

Federman hailed the court ruling, saying he was the victim of "political persecution." He was held for 24 hours at the weekend after being accused of striking a Palestinian and carrying out acts of vandalism against Arab targets in Hebron following the murder of a prominent Jewish settler.

Lives of sage's Egyptian followers gleaned from papyrus, wood

By Mariam Sami
The Associated Press

ISMANT EL KHARAB — It is an eye-straining job for religion professor Iain Gardner.

He pieces together 1,700-year-old wood and papyrus fragments from books and scrolls — recovering the teachings of an ancient religion founded by Mani, a Persian once revered from North Africa to China.

"It is like a jigsaw puzzle," Gardner said.

First, he reads the Old Coptic text, then uses clues like handwriting or a fragment's shape to identify which word fits which line. Ultimately the lines become pages.

Gardner is part of a scientific team working on the Dakkeh Oasis Project, which has traced the anthropological record of the oasis in Egypt's vast Western Desert back hundreds of thousands of years.

About 5,000 writing fragments have been found so far at the site of a town founded 2,000 years ago and known in

ancient times as Kellis and today as Ismant El Kharab.

The pieces — the smallest is the size of a thumbnail — are rare testaments of Manichaeism, a creed that disappeared by the 14th century. Among its followers was the theologian St. Augustine, an adherent for nine years before he turned to Christianity — and against Manichaeism.

Mani believed he was the successor of Jesus. He put together elements from Christianity, Buddhism and Iran's fire-glorifying Zoroastrianism.

His writings in Syriac, an ancient language of the Middle East, were all lost. But the majority of those that had been translated into Old Coptic or Greek survived destruction by Christians, who considered Mani and his followers heretics.

Manichaeism, a faith of dualism, called for freeing the good — or light — trapped in human bodies regarded as inherently evil, or dark. Mani was considered an emissary of light who encouraged his followers to release the good in themselves.

"May also the right hand of light guard: and save you from every evil assault and from the snares of the world," says an excerpt from Mani's Fundamental Epistle.

Mani travelled wide to spread the faith. He died in prison at about age 60 after he returned to Iran in AD 276. Zoroastrian priests, seeing Mani as a threat to their status, wanted to get rid of him. After he died, his body was flayed and hung on a prison wall.

In Kellis, the Manichaeans left behind pots, tools and their religious writings. Most of the fragments found come from a single building that archaeologists call simply House Three.

The writings scrawled in black ink were "not splendid or ornate," said Gardner, who heads the School of Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney in Australia and teaches early Christianity.

But they are "quite unique ... and very important to scholars," he said. Personal and business letters also were found.

A few other Manichaean texts are kept at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, Ireland, and the Egyptian Museum in Berlin.

Others have been found in Central Asia and China.

"But the ones found in Kellis have more variety and are within their context," Gardner said, noting the others were moved far from where they were discovered.

Kellis now is a desolate site of ruined mudbrick walls and stubs of round columns. Thousands of pieces of pottery shards, some coloured in pale blue and white, crunch under foot.

During the town's thriving past, a temple celebrated one of Egypt's old gods, Tutu. A church, believed to be one of the oldest in Egypt, was built in the 4th century.

Although Manichaeism was banned during the Roman Empire in the 4th century, Gardner said Manichaeism may have lasted in the Western Desert until the 7th century.

Judging by what they're finding, the archaeologists believe the

Manichaeans were able to live an ordinary life side by side with Christians, perhaps because Kellis was far from potential persecutors — the authorities based in the Nile Valley.

Some writings found in the ruins were simply shopping lists calling for buying wheat, lentils and chicken.

"Many of the letters are from family members with lots of greetings to aunts," Gardner said. "Often the men were away on trade in the Nile Valley and they wrote letters to their wives and sisters in Dakkeh." Kellis still promises many surprises.

Gardner, who took four years to complete the first volume of Manichaean texts in 1996, expects to spend five years on a second volume and plans two further ones.

Other houses still need to be properly excavated.

"A great majority is still largely untouched," Gardner said. "One could carry on forever."



Husband and wife meet at their marriage ceremony

SYDNEY (AFP) — Two complete strangers met in a Sydney hotel Friday, got married, then sat down to a reception with hundreds of people they had never seen. While arranged marriages are nothing new, this bizarre union was organised by a local radio station. During a seven-week promotion, the station ran a campaign to find the ideal couple. Almost 400 entries were culled by thousands of radio listeners and a panel of psychologists, astrologists and announcers from the station.

Yolanda King joins cast of a TV movie

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Martin Luther King Jr.'s daughter has joined the cast of a TV movie about the 1960s civil rights struggle. Yolanda King has signed on to appear in the "Wonderful World of Disney" movie "Selma, Lord, Selma." The movie is based on two girls' experiences during the 1965 Selma, Alabama, voting rights march led by King, the black civil rights leader assassinated in 1968. Filming is set to begin in Georgia and Alabama this month. The movie is scheduled for broadcast in January.

Hashish and marijuana sold in ice cream truck

NEW YORK (R) — Maybe the ice cream truck's jingle should have been "White Rabbit." Some Brooklyn teen-agers were allegedly feeding their heads as well as their stomachs from the local ice cream truck, until Brooklyn prosecutors indicted two Staten Island men and charged them with selling hashish and marijuana along with the usual popsicles, fudge bars and other frozen treats.

Escalante breaks the record

SAN JOSE (R) — Step aside Kenny G, here comes Geovanny Escalante. Escalante, 24, broke the American pop star's world record for blowing a single musical note into a saxophone by lasting one hour, 30 minutes and 45 seconds, according to the young musician and media reports. Escalante said he was able to hold the note after months of practicing a technique that allows him to blow and breathe at the same time.

Entertainers make their versions of Beatles songs

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Hollywood just can't let it be. Several entertainers do their own versions of Beatles songs on a new superhit compilation that includes Jim Carrey warbling "ku-ku-kachoo" on "I Am the Walrus." The recording, to be called "In My Life," will mark the retirement of 70-year-old Beatles producer George Martin. Celine Dion sings "Here, There and Everywhere," and Jeff Beck takes his guitar to "A Day in the Life." Robin Williams and Goldie Hawn also contribute to the MCA Records project.

Maradona 'a divine choice' as a coach

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A top Mexican soccer club is looking for a hand at the helm — and officials think former Argentine star Diego Maradona would be a divine choice. Eduardo Lezama, vice president of the Autonomous University of Guadalajara Tacos — or Owls — said the club had offered Maradona the coaching job to replace the fired Victor Manuel Vucetich. "We are awaiting his response," Vucetich said. Maradona was known for brilliant play, erratic behaviour and the "hand of God" goal against Britain in the 1986 World Cup.

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January.

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From Ghalia A
in Marrakech

NEW YORK (R) — Maybe
the ice cream truck's jingle
should have been "White
Rabbit." Some Brooklyn
teen-agers were allegedly
feeding their heads as well
as their stomachs from the
local ice cream truck, until
Brooklyn prosecutors
indicted two Staten Island
men and charged them with
selling hashish and marijuana
along with the usual
popsicles, fudge bars and
other frozen treats.

Escalante breaks
the record
SAN JOSE (R) — Step
aside Kenny G, here comes
Geovanny Escalante. Escalante,
24, broke the American pop
star's world record for blowing
a single musical note into a
saxophone by lasting one hour,
30 minutes and 45 seconds,
according to the young musician
and media reports. Escalante
said he was able to hold the
note after months of practicing
a technique that allows him to
blow and breathe at the same
time.

Entertainers
make their
versions of
Beatles songs
LOS ANGELES (AP) —
Hollywood just can't let it be.
Several entertainers do their
own versions of Beatles songs
on a new superhit compilation
that includes Jim Carrey warbling
"ku-ku-kachoo" on "I Am the
Walrus." The recording, to be
called "In My Life," will mark
the retirement of 70-year-old
Beatles producer George Martin.
Celine Dion sings "Here, There
and Everywhere," and Jeff Beck
takes his guitar to "A Day in
the Life." Robin Williams and
Goldie Hawn also contribute to
the MCA Records project.

Maradona 'a
divine choice'
as a coach
MEXICO CITY (AP) — A top
Mexican soccer club is looking
for a hand at the helm — and
officials think former Argentine
star Diego Maradona would be
a divine choice. Eduardo Lezama,
vice president of the Autonomous
University of Guadalajara Tacos
— or Owls — said the club had
offered Maradona the coaching
job to replace the fired Victor
Manuel Vucetich. "We are awaiting
his response," Vucetich said.
Maradona was known for brilliant
play, erratic behaviour and the
"hand of God" goal against
Britain in the 1986 World Cup.